

Kali the mother of time

By Tantra Siddha Maha Yogi Shastrishree Dr.Rupnathji

As the Mahanirvana Tantra says: "To facilitate concentration of mind and for the speedy fulfilment of aspirations, the glorious Kali, the mother of TIME, who is really without form, is invested with forms consistent with her attributes and activities".

Gita, Ch.11, Verse 32.

"I am the mighty world destroying Time,
now engaged in destroying the world".

*Durga Festival Navaratri:-

Explanations based on the teachings of Tantra Siddha Maha Yogi Shastrishree Dr.Rupnathji.

The Ken Upanishad, part three, known as Yaksha Prashna says:

"The supreme power of God is manifested as Knowledge, Activity and Strength".

The Bhagavad Gita describes the same in different words.

Ch14, Verse 5. "Purity, passion and inertia- these qualities, born of nature, bind fast in the body".

These three qualities are known as gunas - Sattwa- Rajas and Tamas.

Each of these three gunas is represented by a colour. Sattwa is white (colour of purity). Sattwa is represented by that aspect of mother Durga we worship as goddess Saraswati. Saraswati wears white. Sattwa binds by attachment to happiness and knowledge. Sattwa is luminous and healthy.

(Gita Ch.14-Verse 6.).

The colour of Rajas is red, represented by that aspect of mother Durga we worship as goddess Lakshmi. She wears red. Rajas is of the nature of activity, passion and ambition, the source of thirst for physical enjoyment. Rajas binds fast one by attachment to action.

-(Gita Ch.14. Verse 7.).

The Rajasic person runs after power, position, name, fame and comforts, and involves himself in endless activities to acquire material wealth.

When we worship goddess Lakshmi for spiritual wealth, she bestows on her devotees the inexhaustible divine wealth or Daivi Sampat (which is described in the Gita, Ch.16, Verses 1,2 and 3). Divine wealth or the wealth of 26 divine qualities, brings with it material prosperity as well.

[Visit page Daivi Sampat - Divine Wealth.

Tamas is black, represented by that aspect of mother Durga we worship as goddess Kali. She is sometimes depicted in dark blue.

Tamas is born of ignorance, deluding all embodied beings. Tamas binds fast in heedlessness, sleep, indolence, laziness (Gita Ch.14 Verse 8). Tamas is that binding force with a tendency to lethargy (lack of energy, vitality), sloth and foolish actions. It causes non-discrimination or delusion. It binds one who associates the Self with the body. A tamasic person acts under the compulsion of the body. He has no power of judgment. His actions are not guided by reasons. His senses are dull.

These are all baser animal qualities, the lower diabolical nature in man. We pray to mother Kali, as Durga the terrible, as supreme power and force, to destroy all our impurities, our vices, our defects. She is to fight and annihilate these demons. This is the 'strength' aspect of shakti as mentioned in the Upanishad. Mother Kali is the power that guides and protects the devotee's spiritual practice from its many dangers and pitfalls.

Mother Kali represents the ferocious and destructive aspect of TIME.

In contrast with creative force in nature, this power is ever active disintegrating forms and structures. It drives heavenly bodies back into their nebulous state.

In the Kenopanishad, part three (Yaksha Prashna), 12th Mantra, the Divine Mother is described as a woman wonderously fair, daughter of the snowy mountain Himavat, her name Hemavati or Uma.

She is the energy aspect of the Lord. Her other name is Durga. This cosmic energy or shakti is the omnipotent power of the Lord. We call her Durga, the Divine Mother.

Lower states of ignorance and egoism are typified by or personified as demons with such names as Dhumralochan, Chanda and Munda, which should be destroyed by the sudden burst of energy and rough handling. Dhumralochan (the smoky-eyed, a person whose understanding is clouded by ignorance) stands for the grosser state of ignorance and egoism. Munda means the low. Munda is the low profile of our egoism. Chanda means fierce. Chanda is the more horrible and fierce side of it. Shumbha and Nishumbha signify more enlightened aspects of egoism. Shumbha means to shine.

Mahishasur stands for ignorance and stubborn egoism. Raktabij represents the more subtle states of desire which multiply endlessly to create more problems.

Navaratri (nine nights)– Durga:

*The nine days' worship is divided into three days of worship for each of the three goddesses-

1. Kali, the goddess of strength for protection and valour
2. Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth
3. Saraswati, the goddess of knowledge.

Three days are allotted to indicate the discipline and training to be practised at the three levels of personality namely physical, mental and intellectual to achieve the goal set for each type of worship. The nine days of spiritual discipline and training are only symbolical. In actual practice, the time required to achieve such discipline will run into many months if not a few years.

*Vijaydashmi-

The tenth day, Vijaydashmi, is the day of victory, representing the day of enlightenment when all vasanas are destroyed and the knowledge of the Self has dawned in the individual. The individual is said to have attained God-realisation. The triumph of having moved from the ignorant state of JIVAHOOD (embodied soul) to the enlightened state of SHIVAHOOD. This day marks the triumph of spirit over matter, of victory of divine qualities over evil qualities, of the removal of ignorance by the light of wisdom and knowledge.

The victory of Durga is the triumph of the aggressive good over evil, the destruction of vasanas / subtle impressions, desires, and the realisation of the divine Self.

In modern language, Saraswati represents pure science and Lakshmi represents applied science. Thus Lakshmi flows from Saraswati. First comes the worship of Saraswati through scientific research and then acquisition, assimilation and distribution of knowledge. This is followed by the worship of Lakshmi through the application of knowledge in all fields of human development and welfare.

*The Legend-

The goddess Durga was created by the three gods - Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara - for overpowering the demons. A fierce light came out of the mouths of the three gods. All that light united and became one. It was a huge mount of light, throwing flames on all sides. That united light grew into a female form known as Durga - Mahamaya. Siva gave her a trident like his own. Vishnu gave her a counterpart of his own chakra. Varuna gave the conch, Agni gave the missile named shakti. Vayu gave bow and arrow, Indra gave vajra and bell. Yama gave danda and the sea gave the noose. Brahma gave rudraksh beads and the ascetics gave water pot. Vishwakarma gave her weapons of sorts and powerful amulets. The Himalayas gave her a lion to ride upon. Thus armed and adorned, the goddess sent forth a loud cry that filled all space, and the echo reverberated with terrible noise, striking terror all round.

The demons sent their most powerful representative Mahishasur in the form of a buffalo to fight Durga. The buffalo represents the lower animal instincts in human beings in an aggressive form. The goddess represents the higher, nobler tendencies also in an aggressive form - the form of Durga.

*The Demons-

The 16th chapter of the Bhagavad Gita is entitled "The yoga of the division between the divine and the demoniacal". Ch.16-Verse 4, The Lord says:

"Hypocrisy,arrogance, self-conceit, anger, and also harshness and ignorance, belong to one who is born in a demoniacal state".

Ch.16-Verse 7.-"The demoniacal know not what to do and what to refrain from; neither purity nor right conduct nor truth is found in them".

Ch.16, Verse 8. - "They say: 'this universe is without truth, without a moral basis, without a God, brought about by a mutual union with lust for its cause, what else?'

Ch.16,Verse 11.-"Giving themselves over to immeasurable cares ending only with death, regarding gratification of lust as their highest aim, and feeling sure that that is all".

Ch.16,Verse 12. - "Bound by a hundred ties of hope, given over to lust and anger, they try to obtain by unlawful means hoards of wealth for sensual enjoyment".

Ch.16,Verse 17.- "Self-conceited, stubborn, filled with the pride and intoxication of wealth, they perform sacrifices (to deceive the world and not out of faith and sincerity) out of ostentation, contrary to scriptural ordinances.

Ch.16-Verse18.- "Given over to egotism, power, haughtiness, lust and anger, these malicious people hate Me in their own bodies and those of others".

"Triple is the gate of this hell"

Ch.16,Verse 21- "Triple is the gate of this hell, destructive of the self-

Lust. Anger and Greed- therefore one should abandon these three".

Ch.16,Verse 22.- "A man who is liberated from these three gates to darkness, practises what is good for him and thus goes to the Supreme goal".

(When these gates to hell are abandoned, the path to salvation is cleared for the aspirant. He gets the company of sages, which leads to liberation. He receives spiritual instructions and practises them. He hears the scriptures, reflects, meditates and attains self-realisation).

Ch. 16, Verse 23.- "He who, having cast aside the ordinances of the scriptures, acts under the impulse of desire, attains neither perfection nor happiness nor the supreme goal".

Gita Ch.16, Verse 24.- "Therefore let the scripture be the authority in determining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done".

('He who desires the welfare of the Self should not disregard the commands of the sacred scriptures. A man who is anxious to attain eternal bliss should respect the Vedas, and the Smritis, which lay down the codes of right conduct. He should readily renounce whatever the scriptures ask him to abandon, and accept whatever he is directed to accept. Treat the scriptures with great respect'.) - Swami Shivananda, Divine Life Society, Rishikesh.

Durga - The sole refuge of men when attacked by robbers

From the Mahabharata

Virata Parva, Section VI:

Translated by Tantra Siddha Maha Yogi Shastrishree Dr.Rupnathji.

"And while Yudhishtira was on his way to the delightful city of Virata, he began to praise mentally the Divine Durga, the Supreme Goddess of the Universe, the giver of prosperity, the enhancer of the glory of the worshipper's family, and the destroyer of Asuras. Divine Durga always rescues the worshipper sunk in sin, like a cow in the mire, who in the hours of distress calls upon that eternal giver of blessings for relieving him of their burdens.

O Thou that has slain the Mahishasura, that Thou art praised and worshipped by the gods for the protection of the three worlds. Thou art the great Kali, capable of going everywhere at will, and bestowing boons on Thy devotees. Thou art ever followed by Brahma and the other gods. By them that call upon Thee for the relief of their burdens, and by them also that bow to Thee at daybreak on earth, there is nothing that cannot be attained in respect either of offspring or wealth. And because you rescue people from difficulties when they are afflicted in the wilderness or sinking in the great ocean, it is for this that Thou art called DURGA by all. Thou art the sole refuge of men when attacked by robbers or while afflicted in crossing streams and seas or in wilderness and forests. Those men that remember thee are never prostrated, O great Goddess.

Thou art Fame, Thou art Prosperity, Thou art Steadiness, Thou art Success; Thou art the Wife, Thou art men's Offspring, Thou art Knowledge, and Thou art the Intellect. Thou art Beauty, Forgiveness, Mercy and every other thing. You dispel, worshipped by your devotees their fetters, ignorance, loss of children and loss of wealth, disease, death and fear. And they in the world who will recite the Mother's attributes and achievements will be freed from their sins. And they who will invoke Her in exile or in the city, in the midst of battle or of dangers from foes, in forests or in inaccessible deserts, in seas or in mountain fastnesses, there is nothing that they will not obtain in this world".

Hymn to Durga

Uttered by Arjuna on the eve of the battle of
Kurukshetra between Pandavas and Kauravas

The Mahabharata

Bhishma Parva

Section XXIII Bhagavad Gita Parva

Translated by Tantra Siddha Maha Yogi Shastrishree Dr. Rupnathji

Addressing Dhritarashtra:-

Sanjaya said: Beholding the Dhartarashtra (Kaurava) army approach for fight, Krishna said these words for Arjuna's benefit.

The holy one (Krishna) said: Cleansing thyself, O mighty armed one, utter on the eve of the battle thy hymn to Durga for (compassing) the defeat of the foe.

Sanjaya continued: Thus addressed on the eve of the battle by Vasudeva (Krishna) endued with great intelligence, Pritha's son Arjuna, alighting from his car (chariot), said the following hymn with joined hands.

Arjuna said: I bow to thee, O leader of Yogins, O thou that art identical with Brahman, O thou that dwellest in the forest of Mandara, O thou that are freed from decrepitude and decay, O Kali, O wife of Kapala, O thou that art of a black and tawny hue. I bow to thee O bringer of benefits to thy devotees, I bow to thee, O Mahakali, O wife of the universal destroyer, I bow to thee, O proud one, O thou that rescuest from dangers, O thou that art endued with every auspicious attribute.

O thou that art sprung from the Kata race, O thou that deservest the most regardful worship, O fierce one, O giver of victory, O victory's self, O thou that bearest a banner of peacock plumes, O thou that art decked with every ornament, O thou that bearest an awful spear, O thou that holdest a sword and shield.

O thou that art the younger sister of the chief of cowherds, O eldest one, O thou that wert born in the race of the cowherd Nanda! O thou that art always fond of buffalo's blood, O thou that wert born in the

race of Kusika, O thou that art dressed in yellow robes, O thou that hadst devoured Asuras assuming the face of a wolf, I bow to thee that art fond of battle!

O Uma, O Sakambhari, O thou that art white in hue, O thou that art black in hue, O thou that hast slain the Asura Kaitabha, O thou that art yellow eyed, O thou that art diverse-eyed, O thou of eyes that have the colour of smoke, I bow to thee.

O thou that art the Vedas, the Srutis, and the highest virtue, O thou that art propitious to Brahmanas engaged in sacrifice, O thou that hast a knowledge of the past, thou that art ever present in the sacred abodes erected to thee in cities of Jamvudwipa, I bow to thee. Thou art the science of Brahma among sciences, and thou that art that sleep of creatures from which there is no waking.

O mother of Skanda, O thou that possesseth the six (highest) attributes, O Durga, O thou that dwellest in accessible regions, thou art described as Swaha, and Swadha, as Kala, as Kashtha, and as Saraswati, as Savitra the mother of the Vedas, and as the science of Vedanta.

[Note: Both Swaha and Swadha are Mantras of high efficacy. Kala and Kashtha are divisions of time. Saraswati implies speech.]

With inner soul cleansed, I praise thee, O great goddess, let victory always attend me through thy grace on the field of battle. In inaccessible regions, where there is fear, in places of difficulty, in the abodes of thy worshippers, and in the nether regions (Patala), thou always dwellest. Thou always defeatest the danavas. Thou art the unconsciousness, the sleep, the illusion, the modesty, the beauty of all creatures.

Thou art the twilight, thou art the day, thou art Savitri, and thou art the mother. Thou art contentment, thou art growth, thou art light. It is thou that supportest the Sun and the Moon and that makes them shine. Thou art the prosperity of those that are prosperous. The Siddhas and Charanas behold thee in contemplation.

Sanjaya continued: Understanding (the measure of) Partha's (Arjuna's) devotion, Durga who is always graciously inclined towards mankind, appeared in the firmament and in the presence of Govinda (Krishna), said these words:

The goddess said: Within a short time thou shalt conquer thy foes, O Pandava. O invincible one, thou hast Narayana (again) for aiding thee. Thou art incapable of being defeated by foes, even by the wielder of the thunderbolt himself.

Sanjaya continued: Having said this, the boon-giving goddess disappeared soon. The son of Kunti, however, obtaining that boon, regarded himself as successful, and the son of Pritha then mounted his own excellent car. And then Krishna and Arjuna, seated on the same car (chariot), blew their celestial conches.

The man that recites this hymn rising at dawn, has no fear any time from Yakshas, Rakshasas, and Pisachas. He can have no enemies; he has no fear from snakes and all animals that have fangs and teeth, and also from kings. He is sure to be victorious in all disputes, and if bound, he is freed from his bonds.

He is sure to get over all difficulties, is freed from thieves, is ever victorious in battle and wins the goddess of prosperity forever. With health and strength, he lives for a hundred years.

I have known all this through the grace of Vyasa endued with great wisdom. Thy wicked sons, however, all entangled in the meshes of death, do not, from ignorance, know them to be Nara and Narayana. Nor do they, entangled in the meshes of death, do not, from ignorance, know that the hour of this kingdom has arrived. Dwaipayana and Narada, and Kanwa, and the sinless Rama, had all prevented thy son. But he did not accept their words. There where righteousness is, there are glory and beauty. There where modesty is, there are prosperity and intelligence. There where righteousness is, there is Krishna; and there where Krishna is, there is victory.

Durga Saptashati

The Devisukta of the Rig Veda

Explanations based upon the writings of

Tantra Siddha Maha Yogi Shastrishree Dr.Rupnathji

Devisukta is a hymn of eight verses found in the most ancient Hindu sacred text, the Rig Veda (in the 10th mandala)

The Devisukta (RV 10.125) declares that the Goddess is the power expressed through all the gods, that they are united in her who shines with consciousness, that her presence is all-pervading, that she supports all of creation, that she is the source of righteousness and the revealer of truth, that she is the source of all worlds, yet that she shines transcendent beyond them. Among Shaktas this Vedic hymn is held in high esteem and is considered to be the source from which the entire Chandi sprang. Later, the Chandi itself was elaborated upon in the Puranas and Tantras.

The Chandi goes by two other names. The most common and widely recognized is Devimahatmya [The Glory of the Goddess]. The other is Sri Durga Saptashati [Seven Hundred Verses to Sri Durga]

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Durga Saptashati Katha

Explanations from other sources

Abridged and paraphrased in a few places

This Katha can be divided into three sections:

The demons Madhu and Kaitabha destroyed by Lord Vishnu

Demon Mahishasur destroyed by Mahamaya (Mother Durga— the united light or combined power of the gods.)

The destructions of demons Shumbha and Nishumbha.

The demons Madhu and Kaitabha destroyed by Lord Vishnu

Section one

Chapter 1 The Slaying of Madhu and Kaitabha

Markandeya said (to his disciple Krasustuki Bhaguri):

There was a king by the name of Suratha who ruled the kingdom of Kola. He was a good king who protected his people and treated them as his sons. Some ministers of Kola plotted against king Suratha

and deposed him. Deprived of his kingdom, king Suratha rode alone on horseback into a dense forest. There he came to the hermitage of sage Medhas, where the sage's disciples enhanced the atmosphere of the place and the wild animals looked mild as if influenced by the tranquil vibrations that emanated from the hermitage.

The sage received king Suratha with due hospitality. While on a walkabout near the hermitage, king Suratha reflected in his own mind. Overcome with attachment, he thought:

'I do not know whether the capital (which was) well guarded by my ancestors and recently deserted by me is being guarded righteously or not by my servants of evil conduct. I do not know what enjoyments (care) my chief elephant, heroic and always elated, and now fallen into the hands of my foes, will get. Those who were my constant followers and received favour, riches and food from me, now certainly pay homage to other kings. The treasures which I gathered with great care will be squandered by those constant spendthrifts, who are addicted to improper expenditures.'

The king was continually thinking of these and other things.

Near the hermitage of the sage the king saw a merchant, and asked him:

'Who are you? What is the reason for your coming here? Wherefore do you appear as if afflicted with grief and depressed in mind?'

Hearing this speech of the king, uttered in a friendly spirit, the merchant bowed respectfully and replied to the king.

The merchant said: 'I am a merchant named Samadhi, born in a wealthy family. I have been cast out by my sons and wife, who are wicked through greed of wealth. My wife and sons have misappropriated my riches, and made me devoid of wealth. Cast out by my trusted kinsmen, I have come to the forest grief-stricken. Dwelling here, I do not know anything about the welfare of my sons, kinsmen and wife. How are they? Are my sons living good or evil lives?'

The king said: 'Why is your mind affectionately attached to those covetous folks, your sons, wife and others, who have deprived you of your wealth?'

The merchant said: 'This very thought has occurred to me, just as you have uttered it. What can I do? My mind does not leave attachment; it bears deep affection to those very persons who have driven me out in their greed for wealth, abandoning love for a father and attachment to one's master and kinsmen. I do not comprehend although, I know it. O noble hearted king, how is it that the mind is prone to love even towards worthless kinsmen? On account of them I heave heavy sighs and feel dejected. What can I do since my mind does not become hard towards those unloving ones?'

Markandeya said: . Then the merchant Samadhi and the noble king Suratha together approached the sage (Medhas); and after observing the etiquette worthy of him and as was proper, they sat down and conversed (with him).

The king said: 'Sir, I wish to ask you one thing. Be pleased to reply to it. Without the control of my intellect, my mind is afflicted with sorrow. Though I have lost the kingdom, like an ignorant man- though I know it- I have an attachment to all the paraphernalia of my kingdom. How is this, O best of sages? And this merchant has been disowned by his children, wife and servants, and forsaken by his own people; still he is inordinately affectionate towards them. Thus both he and I, drawn by attachment towards objects whose defects we do know, are exceedingly unhappy. How does this happen, then, sir, that though we are aware of it, this delusion persists? This delusion besets me as well as him, blinded as we are in respect of discrimination?'

The Rishi said: 'Sir, every being has the knowledge of objects perceivable by the senses. An object of sense reaches it in various ways. Some beings are blind by day, and others are blind by night; some beings have equal sight both by day and night. Human beings are certainly endowed with knowledge, but they are not the only beings (to be so endowed), for cattle, birds, animals and other creatures also cognise (objects of senses).

The knowledge that men have, birds and beasts too have; and what they have men also possess; and the rest (like eating and sleeping) is common to both of them. Look at these birds, which though they possess knowledge, and are themselves distressed by hunger are yet, because of the delusion, engaged in feeding grains into the beaks of their young ones. See with what devotion they put the food grains into the beaks of their young ones? Men, O king, are full of desires. Human beings are, O tiger among men, attached to their children because of greed, expecting rewards in return.

Do you not see this? Even so men are hurled into the whirlpool of attachment, the pit of delusion, through the power of Mahamaya (the Great delusion), who makes the existence of the world possible. Marvel not at this. This Mahamaya is the Yoganidra, of Vishnu, the Lord of the world. It is by her the world is deluded. Verily she, the Bhagavati, the Mahamaya forcibly drawing the minds of even the wise, entangles them into delusion. She creates this entire universe, both moving and unmoving. It is she who, when propitious, becomes a boon-giver to human beings for their final liberation. She is the supreme knowledge, the cause of final liberation, and eternal; she is the cause of the bondage of transmigration and the sovereign over all lords.

The king said: . 'Venerable sir, who is that Devi whom you call Mahamaya? How did she come into being, and what is her sphere of action, O sage? What constitutes her nature? What is her form? Wherefrom did she originate? All that I wish to hear from you, O you supreme among the knowers of Brahman.'

The Rishi said:

She is eternal, embodied as the universe. By her all this is pervaded. Nevertheless she incarnates in manifold ways; hear it from me. When she manifests herself in order to accomplish the purposes of the devas, she is said to be born in the world, though she is eternal. At the end of a kalpa when the universe was one ocean (with the waters of the deluge) and the adorable Lord Vishnu stretched out on Sesa and took the mystic slumber, the terrible asuras (demons) the well-known Madhu and Kaitabha, sprung into being from the dirt of Vishnu's ears, and sought to slay Brahma.

Brahma, the father of beings, was sitting in the lotus (that came out) from Vishnu's navel. Seeing these two fierce asuras and Janardhana (Vishnu) asleep, and with a view to awakening Hari (Vishnu), Brahma with concentrated mind extolled Yoganidra, dwelling in Hari's eyes (appeared as Sleep in the eyes of Vishnu). The resplendent Lord Brahma extolled the incomparable Goddess of Vishnu, Yoganidra, the queen of cosmos, the supporter of the worlds, the cause of the sustenance and dissolution alike (of the universe).

Brahma said: 'O great Mother! You are Svaha (the energy of Devas). You are Svadha (the energy of Pitris). You are verily the Vasat (the emblem of sacrifice). You are the embodiment of Svara (Vedic accent). You are Sudha (the nectar). O eternal and imperishable One, you are the embodiment of the threefold mantra. You are Savitri and the supreme Mother of the devas. You are the goddess of good fortune, the ruler, modesty, intelligence characterized by knowledge, bashfulness, nourishment, contentment, tranquillity and forbearance. Armed with sword, spear, club, discus, conch, bow, arrows, slings and iron mace, you are terrible (and at the same time) you are pleasing, yea more pleasing than all the pleasing things and exceedingly beautiful. You are indeed the supreme Isvari, beyond the high and low. O Devi, bewitch these two unassailable asuras Madhu and Kaitabha with your superior powers. Let Vishnu, the Master of the world, be quickly awakened from sleep and rouse up his nature to slay these two great asuras.'

The Rishi said: There, the Devi of delusion extolled thus by Brahma, the creator, in order to awaken Vishnu for the destruction of Madhu and Kaitabha, drew herself out from every part of Vishnu's body, and appeared before Brahma. Janardana (Vishnu), lord of the universe, rose up from His couch on the universal ocean, and saw those two evil (asuras) Madhu and Kaitabha, of exceeding heroism and power, with eyes red in anger, endeavouring to devour Brahma. Thereupon the all-pervading Lord Vishnu got up and fought with the asuras for five thousand years, using his own arms as weapons. And they, frenzied with their exceeding power, and deluded by Mahamaya, exclaimed to Vishnu, 'Ask a boon from us.'

Lord Vishnu said: 'If you are satisfied with me, you must both be slain by me now. What need is there of any other boon here? My choice is this much indeed.'

The Rishi said: Those two (asuras), thus bewitched (by Mahamaya), gazing then at the entire world turned into water, told Lord Vishnu the lotus eyed One, 'Slay us at the spot where the earth is not flooded with water.' The Rishi said: Saying 'Be it so', Lord Vishnu, the great wielder of conch, discus and mace, took them on His loins and there severed their heads with His discus. Thus she (Mahamaya) herself appeared when praised by Brahma. Now listen again the glory of this Devi that I will tell you. Here ends the first chapter called 'The slaying of Madhu and Kaitabha' of Devi Mahatmya Sri Durga Saptashati in Markandeya Purana, during the period of Savarni, the Manu.

Section Two

Demon Mahishasur destroyed by Mahamaya

(Mother Durga—the united light or combined power of the gods.)

Chapter 2

Slaughter of the Armies of Mahishasura.

Of yore when Mahishasura was the lord of asuras and Indra the lord of devas, there was a war between the devas and asuras for a full hundred years. In that the army of the devas was vanquished by the valorous asuras. After conquering all the devas, Mahishasura became the lord of heaven (Indra).

Then the vanquished devas headed by Brahma, the lord of beings, went to the place where Siva and Vishnu were. The devas described to them in detail, as it had happened, the story of their defeat wrought by Mahishasura.

'He (Mahishasura) himself has assumed the jurisdictions of Surya, Indra, Agni, Vayu, Chandra, Yama and Varuna and other (devas). Thrown out from heaven by that evil-natured Mahisha, the hosts of devas wander on the earth like mortals. All that has been done by the enemy of the devas, has been related to you both, and we have sought shelter under you both. May both of you be pleased to think out the means of his destruction.'

Having thus heard the words of the devas, Vishnu was angry and also Siva, and their faces became fierce with frowns. There issued forth a great light from the face of Vishnu who was full of intense anger, and from that of Brahma and Siva too. From the bodies of Indra and other devas also sprang forth a very great light. And (all) this light united together. The devas saw there a concentration of light like a mountain blazing excessively, pervading all the quarters with its flames. Then that unique light, produced from the bodies of all the devas, pervading the three worlds with its lustre, combined into one and became a female form; the manifestation of the lights of other devas too (contributed to the being of the) auspicious Devi. Then looking at her, who had come into being from the assembled lights of all the devas, the immortals who were oppressed by Mahishasura experienced joy.

The bearer of Pinaka (Siva) drawing forth a trident from his own trident presented it to her; and Vishnu bringing forth a discus out of his own discus gave her. Varuna gave her a conch, Agni a spear; and Maruta gave a bow as well as two quivers full of arrows.

Indra, lord of devas, bringing forth a thunderbolt out of (his own) thunderbolt and a bell from that of his elephant Airavata, gave her. Yama gave a staff from his own staff of Death and Varuna, the lord of waters, a noose; and Brahma, the lord of beings, gave a string of beads and a water-pot.

The earth quaked and all the mountains rocked. 'Victory to you,' exclaimed the devas in joy to her, the lion-rider. The sages, who bowed their bodies in devotion, extolled her. Seeing the three worlds agitated the foes of devas, mobilized all their armies and rose up together with uplifted weapons. Mahishasura, exclaiming in wrath, 'Ha! What is this?' rushed towards that roar, surrounded by innumerable asuras. Then he saw the Devi pervading the three worlds with her lustre. Making the earth bend with her footstep, scraping the sky with her diadem, shaking the nether worlds with the twang of the bowstring, and standing there pervading all the quarters around with her thousand arms. Then began a battle between that Devi and the enemies of the devas, in which the quarters of the sky were illumined by the

weapons and arms hurled diversely. The profuse blood from the asuras, elephants and horses flowed immediately like large rivers amidst that army of the asuras. As fire consumes a huge heap of straw and wood, so did Ambika destroy that vast army of asuras in no time.

Here ends the second chapter called 'Slaughter of the armies of Mahisasura' of Devi-Mahatmya in Markandeya-Purana, during the period of Savarni, the Manu.

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