durgAstutiH Essence of devI mAhAtmya kathA

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Being pleased by the praises sung by Brahma who was troubled by the asuras Madhu and Kaitabha at the end of a kalpa, She, the supreme Devi, supporter of the worlds, emerged out of MahaVishnu's eyes, who was in mystic slumber. Deluded by Mahamaya, the evil asuras, Madhu and Kaitabha, were then slain by MahaVishnu. Let Goddess Durga become a fort for me to stop the terrible army of kRitAnta, the god of death.

When Mahishasura was creating havoc in all the three worlds, the devas got together and requested Brahma, Siva and Vishnu for help. Then Goddess Durga was created and weapons were given by them. Let Goddess Durga, whose battle attire is accompanied by the loud cries of the devas, become a fort for me to stop the terrible army of kRitAnta, the god of death.

The sighs heaved by the Goddess turned into battallions and
with them she killed the army of asuras. Then She killed ChikShura, the general of the asura army. Her lion jumped on Chamara, another able member of the asuras and killed him in a battle. Within moments She also destroyed the enemies udagra, karAla, bAShkala, biDAla and others. Let Goddess Durga become a fort for me to stop the terrible army of kRitAnta, the god of death.

When Mahisha who shook the entire world approached the Devi, She destroyed him. But, he then took the form of a lion, then came in the form of man, elephant and back to his original form. She then attacked him with her foot and cut him up with Her sword. Let Goddess Durga become a fort for me to stop the terrible army of kRitAnta, the god of death.

You are the personification of the power of the entire host of devas, auspicious one, mAya - the consort of the parabrahman, brave one, in a battle You are the form of LakShmi, Sarasvati and other manifestations, yet, immediately like a lightning, You grace people due to compassion, protect us with trident and other weapons. Thus when the devas praised You, You gave them boons. Let that Goddess Durga become a fort for me to stop the terrible army of kRitAnta, the god of death.
Praised by the devas who were suffering because of their defeat at the hands of the arrogant shumbha and nishumbha, a gentle form emerged out of pArvati at the slopes of Himalayas. Sportingly She attracted all the three worlds and was seen by chaNDa and muNDa. Let that Goddess Durga become a fort for me to stop the terrible army of kRitAnta, the god of death.

Being informed by chaNDa of the Devi’s beautiful form, shumbha became desirous of attaining her and immediately sent a messenger. She sent him back with the message that only the one who defeats her in a battle can become her husband. Enraged by her answer, shumbha sent dhUmralochana, who wanted to fight. Devi destroyed dhUmralochana along with his army. Let that Goddess Durga become a fort for me to stop the terrible army of kRitAnta, the god of death.

When chaNDa and muNDa came with their forces, She created kAli from her forehead. kAli then destroyed the army and its weapons and then killed chaNDa and muNDa. Later when Shumba’s army approached, kAli expressed her anger by roaring aloud. Let that Goddess Durga become a fort for me to stop the terrible army of kRitAnta, the god of death.
Then shivadUti (one who sent Siva as messenger) - her own power was created from combining the powers of all the devas of the brahmAnda. Then She was called to battle by the asuras who were incited by the words of shiva (lord with the moon on his head) who was sent by Her. She became delighted on seeing the army being attacked by the angry mothers - the manifestations of the devas’ powers. Let that Goddess Durga become a fort for me to stop the terrible army of kRitAnta, the god of death.

The devas next saw the asura raktabIja, who came to the battlefield and who created fear by filling earth with warriors (of his kind) who sprung from his blood that oozed out of him when he was struck by the shaktis. Then as and when Devi attacked raktabIja, kAli drank his blood and ultimately he perished. Let that Goddess Durga become a fort for me to stop the terrible army of kRitAnta, the god of death.

Next was the terrible battle with shumbha and nishumbha. nishumbha who fought with an axe and arrows was struck unconscious by Devi with a sword. Then with the trident She struck shumbha who was fighting ferociously with 'shakti’ - indra’s weapon and with arrows. Let that Goddess Durga become a fort for me to stop the terrible army of kRitAnta, the god of death.
Again, nishumbha sent forth many chakras at the Devi which She broke. She broke his gada with Her sword and then tore his chest with Her trident. Another form of his came from his chest and was immediately killed by Devi with her sword. Let that Goddess Durga become a fort for me to stop the terrible army of kRitAnta, the god of death.

When the different shaktis and Her lion were fighting the asuras, shumbha accused the devi of depending on another’s strent. So She merged all other manifestations into Herself and fought for a long with shumba who fought with many kinds of weapons (shastra) and astras (arrows released after invoking a mantra). Let that Goddess Durga become a fort for me to stop the terrible army of kRitAnta, the god of death.

shumba’s weapons were destroyed and he was hit by Devi with her palm. An angry shumbha took Her to the sky and fought fiercely. Devi then decided that She had fought enough and killed him with Her trident and made the earth free of distress. Let that Goddess Durga become a fort for me to stop the terrible army of kRitAnta, the god of death.
Remover of the miseries of those who are distressed, Bestower of auspicious things, be pleased. nArAyaNi, You are the entire world. brahmANi, the first being, protect us from fear with Your weapons like trident and others and kill all diseases. O Giver of everything, give us boons." Thus She was praised by the devas. Let that Goddess Durga become a fort for me to stop the terrible army of kRitAantas, the god of death.

Whenever I am remembered, I will again kill the host of asuras. Always and everywhere I will protect those who are involved in the stories describing My greatness. And I will give everything that they wish for." So saying She disappeared. Let that Goddess Durga become a fort for me to stop the terrible army of kRitAantas, the god of death.

Hearing the greatness of Devi as related by the RiShi sumedhas, king suratha performed tapas on the mountain sahyAdri for three years and got a vision of the Goddess. She gave his kingdom back to suratha and and the boon that he will be born to Lord sUrya and his wife savarNA and will be known as sAvarNi and become the next manu. She also gave the boon of self-realisation to the vaishya. Let that Goddess Durga become a fort for me to stop the terrible army of kRitAantas, the god of death.
By reading the seventeen verses of shrIdurgAsrutI daily, man is freed from fear of death, leaves behind difficulties, gets all that he wishes for and attains liberty. And in that state of liberation, due to the grace of the Goddess, he enjoys in its entirety the fruit that arises out of reading the greatness of Goddess girijA.

With this, the hymn durgAstutiH concludes.

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