

ದುರ್ಗಾಸ್ತೋತ್ರಂ ಶ್ರೀಶಿವಕೃತಮ್

{|| ದುರ್ಗಾಸ್ತೋತ್ರಂ ಶ್ರೀಶಿವಕೃತಮ್ ||}

ರಕ್ಷ ರಕ್ಷ ಮಹಾದೇವಿ ದುರ್ಗೇ ದುರ್ಗತಿನಾಶಿನಿ ।

ಮಾಂ ಭಕ್ತಮನುರಕ್ತಂ ಚ ಶತ್ರುಗ್ರಸ್ತಂ ಕೃಪಾಮಯಿ || ೧ ||

ವಿಷ್ಣುಮಾಯೇ ಮಹಾಭಾಗೇ ನಾರಾಯಣಿ ಸನಾತನಿ ।

ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಸ್ವರೂಪೇ ಪರಮೇ ನಿತ್ಯಾನಂದಸ್ವರೂಪಿಣೀ || ೨ ||

ತ್ವಂ ಚ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಾದಿದೇವಾನಾಮಮ್ಬಿಕೇ ಜಗದಮ್ಬಿಕೇ ।

ತ್ವಂ ಸಾಕಾರೇ ಚ ಗುಣತೋ ನಿರಾಕಾರೇ ಚ ನಿರ್ಗುಣಾತ್ || ೩ ||

ಮಾಯಯಾ ಪುರುಷಸ್ತ್ವಂ ಚ ಮಾಯಯಾ ಪ್ರಕೃತಿಃ ಸ್ವಯಮ್ ।

ತಯೋಃ ಪರಂ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮ ಪರಂ ತ್ವಂ ಬಿಭರ್ಷಿ ಸನಾತನಿ || ೪ ||

ವೇದಾನಾಂ ಜನನೀ ತ್ವಂ ಚ ಸಾವಿತ್ರೀ ಚ ಪರಾತ್ಪರಾ ।

ವೈಕುಣ್ಠೇ ಚ ಮಹಾಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೀಃ ಸರ್ವಸಮ್ಪತ್ಸ್ವರೂಪಿಣೀ || ೫ ||

ಮರ್ತ್ಯಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೀಶ್ಚ ಕ್ಷೀರೋದೇ ಕಾಮಿನೀ ಶೇಷಶಾಯಿನಃ ।

ಸ್ವರ್ಗೇಷು ಸ್ವರ್ಗಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೀಸ್ತ್ವಂ ರಾಜಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೀಶ್ಚ ಭೂತಲೇ || ೬ ||

ನಾಗಾದಿಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೀಃ ಪಾತಾಲೇ ಗೃಹೇಷು ಗೃಹದೇವತಾ ।

ಸರ್ವಸಸ್ಯಸ್ವರೂಪಾ ತ್ವಂ ಸರ್ವೈಶ್ಚರ್ಯವಿಧಾಯಿನೀ || ೭ ||

ರಾಗಾಧಿಷ್ಠಾತ್ಮದೇವೀ ತ್ವಂ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಣಶ್ಚ ಸರಸ್ವತೀ ।

ಪ್ರಾಣಾನಾಮಧಿದೇವೀ ತ್ವಂ ಕೃಷ್ಣಸ್ಯ ಪರಮಾತ್ಮನಃ || ೮ ||

ಗೋಲೋಕೇ ಚ ಸ್ವಯಂ ರಾಧಾ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣಸ್ಯೈವ ವಕ್ಷಸಿ |
ಗೋಲೋಕಾಧಿಷ್ಠಾತಾ ದೇವೀ ವೃಂದಾವನವನೇ ವನೇ || ೯ ||

ಶ್ರೀರಾಸಮಣ್ಣಲೇ ರಮ್ಯಾ ವೃಂದಾವನವಿನೋದಿನೀ |
ಶತಶೃಂಗಾಧಿದೇವೀ ತ್ವಂ ನಾಮ್ನಾ ಚಿತ್ರಾವಲೀತಿ ಚ || ೧೦ ||

ದಕ್ಷಕನ್ಯಾ ಕುತ್ರ ಕಲ್ಪೇ ಕುತ್ರಕಲ್ಪೇ ಚ ಶೈಲಜಾ |
ದೇವಮಾತಾ ದಿತಿಸ್ತ್ವಂ ಚ ಸರ್ವಾಧಾರಾ ವಸುನ್ಧರಾ || ೧೧ ||

ತ್ವಮೇವ ಗಂಗಾ ತುಲಸೀ ತ್ವಂ ಚ ಸ್ವಾಹಾ ಸ್ವಧಾ ಸತೀ |
ತ್ವದಂಶಾಂಶಾಂಶಕಲಯಾ ಸರ್ವದೇವಾದಿಯೋಷಿತಃ || ೧೨ ||

ಸ್ತ್ರೀರೂಪಂ ಚಾಪಿ ಪುರುಷಂ ದೇವಿ ತ್ವಂ ಚ ನಪುಂಸಕಮ್ |
ವೃಕ್ಷಾಣಾಂ ವೃಕ್ಷರೂಪಾ ತ್ವಂ ಸೃಷ್ಟೌ ಚಾಚ್ಚುರರೂಪಿಣೀ || ೧೩ ||

ವಹ್ನೌ ಚ ದಾಹಿಕಾ ಶಕ್ತಿರ್ಜಲೇ ಶೈತ್ಯಸ್ವರೂಪಿಣೀ |
ಸೂರ್ಯೇ ತೇಜಸ್ವರೂಪಾ ಚ ಪ್ರಭಾರೂಪಾ ಚ ಸಂತತಮ್ || ೧೪ ||

ಗನ್ಧರೂಪಾ ಚ ಭೂಮೌ ಚ ಆಕಾಶೇ ಶಬ್ದರೂಪಿಣೀ |
ಶೋಭಾಸ್ವರೂಪಾ ಚಂದ್ರೇ ಚ ಪದ್ಮಸಂಭವೇ ಚ ನಿಶ್ಚಿತಮ್ || ೧೫ ||

ಸೃಷ್ಟೌ ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಸ್ವರೂಪಾ ಚ ಪಾಲನೇ ಪರಿಪಾಲಿಕಾ |
ಮಹಾಮಾರೀ ಚ ಸಂಹಾರೇ ಜಲೇ ಚ ಜಲರೂಪಿಣೀ || ೧೬ ||

ಕ್ಷುತ್ ತ್ವಂ ದಯಾ ತ್ವಂ ನಿದ್ರಾ ತ್ವಂ ತೃಷ್ಣಾ ತ್ವಂ ಬುದ್ಧಿರೂಪಿಣೀ |
ತುಷ್ಟಿಸ್ತ್ವಂ ಚಪಿ ಪುಷ್ಟಿಸ್ತ್ವಂ ಶ್ರದ್ಧಾ ತ್ವಂ ಚ ಕ್ಷಮಾ ಸ್ವಯಮ್ || ೧೭ ||

ಶಾನ್ತಿಸ್ವಯಂ ಚ ಸ್ವಯಂ ಭ್ರಾನ್ತಿಃ ಕಾನ್ತಿಸ್ವಯಂ ಕೀರ್ತಿರೇವ ಚ |
ಲಜ್ಜಾ ತ್ವಂ ಚ ತಥಾ ಮಾಯಾ ಭುಕ್ತಿಮುಕ್ತಿಸ್ವರೂಪಿಣೀ || ೧೮||

ಸರ್ವಶಕ್ತಿಸ್ವರೂಪಾ ತ್ವಂ ಸರ್ವಸಂಪತ್ಯದಾಯಿನೀ |
ವೇದೇಽನಿರ್ವಚನೀಯಾ ತ್ವಂ ತ್ವಾಂ ನ ಜಾನಾತಿ ಕಶ್ಚನ || ೧೯ ||

ಸಹಸ್ರವಕ್ತ್ರಸ್ತ್ವಾಂ ಸ್ತೋತುಂ ನ ಶಕ್ತಃ ಸುರೇಶ್ವರಿ |
ವೇದಾಃ ನ ಶಕ್ತಾಃ ಕೋ ವಿದ್ವಾನ್ ನ ಚ ಶಕ್ತಾ ಸರಸ್ವತೀ || ೨೦||

ಸ್ವಯಂ ವಿಧಾತಾ ಶಕ್ತೋ ನ ಚ ವಿಷ್ಣುಃ ಸನಾತನಃ |
ಕಿಂ ಸ್ತೌಮಿ ಪೞ್ವಾ ವಕ್ತ್ರೇಣ ರಣತ್ರಸ್ತೋ ಮಹೇಶ್ವರಿ |
ಕೃಪಾಂ ಕುರು ಮಹಾಮಾಯೇ ಮಮ ಶತ್ರುಕ್ಷಯಂ ಕುರು || ೨೧||

|| ಇತಿ ದುರ್ಗಾಸ್ತೋತ್ರಂ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣಮ್ ||

COMMENTS -

Some comments about Durga are provided here.

The following abbreviations are used in the comments that follow.

LS - Lalitha Sahasranamam.

BG - Sri Bhagavat Gita

DK - Durga Chandrakala stuti by Sri Appayya DikShita

DS - Durga Saptasati

The literal meaning of the word 'Durga' is unapproachable, unattainable, impossible to enter, un-understandable, and so on. It also implies, dense and narrow forest; the passage to cross the river; fort; obstacle; and the like. When these meanings are worked out, the term 'Durga' is taken to mean quintessentially the one who, like a fortress, protects men of

virtue and dispels the darkness of ignorance of her devotees. Durga is known by numerous names. The Sanskrit lexicon Amarakosa gives these names.

ಉಮಾ ಕಾತ್ಯಾಯನೀ ಗೌರೀ ಕಾಲೀ ಹೈಮವತೀಶ್ವರೀ |
ಶಿವಾ ಭವಾನೀ ರುದ್ರಾಣೀ ಶರ್ವಾಣೀ ಸರ್ವಮಜ್ಜಲಾ |
ಅಪರ್ಣಾ ಪಾರ್ವತೀ ದುರ್ಗಾ ಮೃಡಾನೀ ಚಣ್ಡಿಕಾಪ್ಪಿಕಾ |
ಆರ್ಯಾ ದಾಕ್ಷಾಯಣೀ ಚೈವ ಗಿರಿಜಾ ಮೇನಕಾತ್ಮಜಾ |
ಸತೀ ಚ ಕಾಲರಾತ್ರೀ ಚ ಭೈರವೀ ಗಣನಾಯಿಕಾ ||

In addition, we have (ನಾಮಾವಲಿ) strings of Her names, both short and long. All are suitable for recitation and confer numerous benefits.

One of the names given above requires our special attention – that is (ಶಿವಾ) ShivA (long). The scriptures say that Devi's is another form of the Lord or Supreme Being. The following verses from Sri Rudram say that clearly.

ಯಾ ತೇ ರುದ್ರ ಶಿವಾ ತನೂರಘೋರಾಪಾಪಕಾಶಿನೀ |
ತಯಾ ನಸ್ತನುವಾ ಶಸ್ತ್ರಮಯಾ ಗಿರಿಶನ್ತಾಭಿಜಾಕಶೀಹಿ ||

One of the forms of the Lord is that of Shiva with which we are familiar – the one with matted locks, bearing weapons etc. The other form is described here. It is very auspicious, has no weapons in hand and so does not cause any fear in the minds of the devotees, confers both worldly pleasures and also liberation. ಅಘೋರಾ = does not cause fear in the minds of devotees as It does not bear weapons. ಅಪಾಪಕಾಶಿನೀ = confers bliss or mokSha by blessing the devotee with spiritual wisdom (ಜ್ಞಾನಮ್). ಗಿರಿಶನ್ತ = One who being the purport of the vedas blesses all with all that will give happiness. Again we see later on

in the hymn:-

ಯಾ ತೇ ರುದ್ರ ಶಿವಾ ತನೂಃ ಶಿವಾ ವಿಶ್ವಾಹಭೇಷಜೀ ।

ಶಿವಾ ರುದ್ರಸ್ಯ ಭೇಷಜೀ ತಯಾ ನೋ ಮೃಡ ಜೀವಸೇ ॥

This says – Oh Lord Rudra! By that form of Yours which is peaceful and auspicious, since it is a panacea for human ills like sickness poverty etc., for all days, more auspicious since by the grant of knowledge and illumination, it utterly uproots ignorance and the entire misery of samsara, by that gracious form of Yours make us lead a full and happy life. Here the word ವಿಶ್ವಾಹಭೇಷಜೀ means the form is auspicious because it cures, like a potent medicine, all sickness, poverty etc. The other aspect of the form is ರುದ್ರಸ್ಯ ಭೇಷಜೀ – it confers spiritual wisdom or jnanam which is the only cure for the misery of cyclic birth and death or samsara. Sri Krishna says that to those devotees who worship Him with love, He gives that devotion of right knowledge (buddhi yoga) by which they reach Him. Out of compassion for them, He abides in their self and destroys the darkness born of ignorance by blessing them with right knowledge. BG(10-10,11)

ತೇಷಾಂ ಸತತ-ಯುಕ್ತಾನಾಂ ಭಜತಾಂ ಪ್ರೀತಿ-ಪೂರ್ವಕಮ್ ।

ದದಾಮಿ ಬುದ್ಧಿಯೋಗಂ ತಂ ಯೇನ ಮಾಮುಪಯನ್ತಿ ತೇ ॥(೧೦)

ತೇಷಾಮೇವಾನುಕಂಪಾರ್ಥಂ ಅಹಮಜ್ಞಾನಜಂ ತಮಃ ।

ನಾಶಯಾಮ್ಯಾತ್ಮ-ಭಾವಸ್ಥೋ ಜ್ಞಾನ-ದೀಪೇನ ಭಾಸ್ವತ ॥(೧೧)

Accordingly, one who worships Durga with devotion is blessed with right knowledge or jnanam by which one attains liberation.

We saw in the beginning that Uma is one of the names of Durga. The name Uma is made of the same three letters A,U and M that make up the AUM the holy syllable Pranavam, but in a different order. Thus Uma (or Durga) represents the Supreme brahman represented by Pranavam. The Kena Upanishad (Part 3) mentions Uma (the daughter of Himavan) to be the personification of Supreme Knowledge (Brahma Vidya). She appeared before the devas and their chief Indra and taught Indra the Supreme Knowledge.

ಸ ತಸ್ಮಿನ್ನೇವಾಕಾಶೇ ಸ್ತ್ರಿಯಮಾಜಗಾಮ ಬಹುಶೋಭಮಾನಾಮುಮಾಂ ಹೈಮವತೀಂ...

Thus, one should pray to Durga not only for freedom from domestic worries but also for freedom from samsara. Especially, one should pray to Her when in dire straits. The following verses says this.

ಕಾಂತಾರ-ಮಧ್ಯ-ದೃಢಲಗ್ನತಯಾ-ವಸನ್ನಾ
ಮಗ್ನಾಶ್ಚ ವಾರಿಧಿ-ಜಲೇ ರಿಪುಭಿಷ್ಟ ರುದ್ರಾಃ |
ಯಸ್ಯಾಃ ಪ್ರಪದ್ಯ ಚರಣೌ ವಿಪದಸ್ತರನ್ತಿ
ಸಾ ಮೇ ಸದಾ-ಸ್ತು ಹೃದಿ ಸರ್ವ-ಜಗತ್ಸವಿತ್ರೀ || DK(12).

The above verse says that those who have lost their way in the thick forests and so are distressed, those who are caught in the deep seas and are struggling to get out, those who are troubled by enemies get their problems removed by surrendering to the feet of Durga. She should reside in my mind all the time.

ಬನ್ಧೇ ವಧೇ ಮಹತಿ ಮೃತ್ಯುಭಯೇ ಪ್ರಸಕ್ತೇ
ವಿತ್ತಕ್ಷಯೇ ಚ ವಿವಿಧೇ ಚ ಮಹೋಪತಾಪೇ |
ಯತ್ಪಾದ-ಪೂಜನಮಿಹ ಪ್ರತಿಕಾರಮಾಹು-
ಸ್ಸಾ ಮೇ ಸಮಸ್ತ-ಜನನೀ ಶರಣಂ ಭವಾನೀ || DK(13).

This verse says that great men have said that worshipping Goddess Durga will bring relief from all kinds of fears, such as, that of imprisonment, death, being killed, looss of wealth, thieves, snakes, other wild animals etc. I surrender to such Durga, the mother of all. Durga is one of the popular deities in the Hindu pantheon like Ganesha. She is worshipped regularly and especially on Fridays and certain special occasions. She is worshipped in the first three days of the Navaratri festival. She is sought by people who are afflicted by problems in the family or work place or beset by the adverse effects of malefic planetary aspects. She had been worshipped by people to get their wishes fulfilled.

The Durgasaptasati states this clearly .

ದುರ್ಗೇ ಸ್ಮೃತಾ ಹರಸಿ ಭೀತಿಮಶೇಷಜನ್ತೋಃ
ಸ್ವೈಃ ಸ್ಮೃತಾ ಮತಿಮತೀವ ಶುಭಂ ದದಾಸಿ |
ದಾರಿದ್ರ್ಯ ದುಃಖಭಯಹಾರಿಣಿ ಕಾ ತ್ವದನ್ಯಾ
ಸರ್ವೋಪಕಾರಕರಣಾಯ ಸದಾಽಽದ್ರ್ಯಚಿತ್ತಾ ||

The Durga Suktam also says this

ತಾಮಗ್ನಿವರ್ಣಾಂ ತಪಸಾ ಜ್ವಲಂತೀಂ ವೈರೋಚನೀಂ ಕರ್ಮಫಲೇಷುಜುಷ್ಣಾಮ್ |
ದುರ್ಗಾಂ ದೇವೀಂ ಶರಣಮಹಂ ಪ್ರಪದ್ಯೇ ಸುತರಸಿ ತರಸೇ ನಮಃ|

The mantra says that I surrender to Durga Devi who is glorious since She is well known in the scriptures. She is shining like fire, burns up Her enemies by Her radiance, is self-efulent, is worshipped by those who seek fulfilment of the rites performed by them and Who is capable of helping people to get across the cyclic birth.

We see in Mahabharata that Yudhishtira was advised by sages to pray to Durga for the successful completion of the absence from the kingdom for

fourteen years without being recognised, (ie) incognito and later on to gain victory in the ensuing KurukShetra war. He praised Durga with Durga NakShatramalika Stuti consisting of 27 verses that was taught to him by the sages. Pleased with the Stuti recited by Yudhishtira with great devotion Durga Devi appeared before him and blessed him with success in his endeavours and the war he will be waging against the Kauravas. Mahabharata also says that Arjuna - on being advised by Sri Krishna-prayed to Durga before the start of the war for success.

Srimad Bhagavatam mentions (BH-10-22-4) that the maidens of Gokula desirous of having Sri Krishna for their husband worshipped Her. They observed a month long ritual, woke up early in the morning, took bath in the Yamuna river and had only frugal meals consisting of oblations

ಹೇಮಂತೇ ಪ್ರಥಮೇ ಮಾಸಿ ನಂದವ್ರಜ-ಕುಮಾರಿಕಾಃ |

ಚೇರು-ಹರ್ವಿಷ್ಯಂ ಭುಂಜಾನಾಃ ಕಾತ್ಯಾಯನೈರ್ಚನ-ವ್ರತಮ್ ||

ಆಪ್ಲುತ್ಯಾಂಭಸಿ ಕಾಲಿನ್ದ್ಯಾ ಜಲಾಂತೇ ಚೋದಿತೇಽರುಣೇ |

ಕೃತ್ವಾ ಪ್ರತಿಕೃತಿಂ ದೇವೀಮಾನರ್ಚುರ್ನೃಪ ಸೈಕತೀಮ್ ||

ಗಂಧೈ-ಮಾರ್ಘೈಃ ಸುರಭಿಭಿ-ರ್ವಲಿಭಿ-ಧೂಪದೀಪಕೈಃ |

ಉಚ್ಚಾವಚೈಶ್ಚೋಪಹಾರೈಃ ಪ್ರವಾಲಫಲತಣ್ಡುಲೈಃ ||

They chanted the following prayer.

ಕಾತ್ಯಾಯನಿ ಮಹಾಮಾಯೇ ಮಹಯೋಗಿನ್ಯಧೀಶ್ವರಿ |

ನಂದಗೋಪಸುತಂ ದೇವಿ ಪತಿಂ ಮೇ ಕುರು ತೇ ನಮಃ ||

It is said that Shri Krishna came and accepted them. This shows that

one who prays to Durga with devotion will get their wishes fulfilled without any delay. The following verse emphasises this and points out that many sages had to practise severe austerities like fasting to get a brief vision of the Lord. But the gopis got to see Him after worshipping Durga for just one month. This again proves that worshipping Durga gives quick results.

ಯದ್ಧ್ಯಾನಜಂ ಸುಖಮವಾಪ್ಯಮನಂತಪುಣ್ಯೈಃ
ಸಾಕ್ಷಾತ್ಸಮಚ್ಯುತಪರಿಗ್ರಹಮಾಶ್ವಾವಾಪುಃ |
ಗೋಪಾಙ್ಗನಾಃ ಕಿಲ ಯದರ್ಚನಪುಣ್ಯಮಾತ್ರಾ-
ತ್ಸಾ ಮೇ ಸದಾ ಭಗವತೀ ಭವತು ಪ್ರಸನ್ನಾ || DK(16).

Similarly, Srimad Bhagavatam says (BH-10-44, 45, 46, 47) in the story of Sri Rukmini's marriage that she prayed to Devi to get Sri Krishna as husband.

ಆಸಾದ್ಯ ದೇವೀಸದನಂ ಧೌತಪಾದಕರಾಂಬುಜಾ |
ಉಪಸ್ಪೃಶ್ಯ ಶುಚಿಃ ಶಾಂತಾ ಪ್ರವಿವೇಶಾಂಬಿಕಾನ್ತಿಕಮ್ ||

ತಾಂ ವೈ ಪ್ರವಯಸೋ ಬಾಲಾಂ ವಿಧಿಜ್ಞಾ ವಿಪ್ರಯೋಷಿತಃ |
ಭವಾನೀಂ ವಂದಯಾಂಚಕುಃ ಭವಪತ್ನೀಂ ಭವಾನ್ವಿತಾಮ್ ||

ನಮಸ್ತೇ ತ್ವಾಂಬಿಕೇಽಭೀಕ್ಷ್ಯಂ ಸ್ವಸಂತಾನಯುತಾಂ ಶಿವಾಮ್ |
ಭೂಯಾತ್ ಪತಿರ್ಮೇ ಭಗವಾನ್ ಕೃಷ್ಣಸ್ತದನುಮೋದತಾಮ್ ||

ಅಧ್ವಿರ್ಗಂಧಾಕ್ಷತೈರ್ಧೂಮೈರ್ವಾಸಃಸ್ರಜ್ಮಾಲ್ಯಭೂಷಣೈಃ |
ನಾನೋಪಹಾರಬಲಿಭಿಃ ಪ್ರದೀಪಾವಲಿಭಿಃ ಪೃಥಕ್ ||

The verses in the Stotra show that Durga is indeed the Supreme Being (Brahma), Its power of Maya also. She alone appears as Sarasvati, Laxmi and Parvati. Thus, by worshipping Durga one may get all the benefits of worshipping the three devis. We may see the names of all the three Devis in the Lalitha Sahasranama and in their namavalis also. So it is clear that the names may be different, but the power behind the names is one and the same.

The verses also reveal the fact that Durga is every object in the cration and as the result any power or glory we notice in everything in the creation really a reflection of Durga's glory only. This recalls to what Sri Krishna said in the Gita.(CH 10-41).

ಯದ್ಯದ್ವಿಭೂತಿಮತ್ ಸತ್ತ್ವಂ ಶ್ರೀಮ-ದೂರ್ಜಿತಮೇವ ವಾ |
ತತ್ತದೇವಾವಗಚ್ಛ ತ್ವಂ ತೇಜೋಽಶ-ಸಂಭವಮ್ ||

Thus the verse 14 says that Durga is the heat in the fire, chillness in the water, brightness in the sun . This is an echo of what Krishna said in BG(7-8).

ರಸೋಽಹಮಪ್ಪು ಕೌಂತೇಯ ಪ್ರಭಾಸ್ಮಿ ಶಶಿ-ಸೂರ್ಯಯೋಃ |
ಪ್ರಣವಃ ಸರ್ವವೇದೇಷು ಶಬ್ದಃ ಖೇ ಪೌರುಷಂ ನೃಷು ||

We may find many similar statemants in the verses that may be found in the Bhagavad Gita and upanishads. The conclusion to be drawn is that what is called here by the name Durga is none other than the Supreme Being or Brahmam. One may choose to worship It by any name or form and get one's desires fulfilled. The Lord said this in Gita. (7-21).

ಯೋ ಯೋ ಯಾಂ ಯಾಂ ತನುಂ ಭಕ್ತಃ ಶ್ರದ್ಧಯಾರ್ಚಿತುಮಿಚ್ಛತಿ |

ತಸ್ಯ ತಸ್ಯಾಚಲಾಂ ಶ್ರದ್ಧಾಂ ತಾಮೇವ ವಿದಧಾಮ್ಯಹಮ್ ||

This shows that one who may be worshipping God in any other form can worship Durga also without any hesitation since names and forms cover one and the only supreme Being only.

One fact that may intrigue the readers is the name of this stotram. It says that it is in praise of Durga by none other than Siva, who according to our Puranas is Her husband! How can this be? The answer is simple. As said above, Durga is not different from Siva. She is just another form of Siva only and both are forms and names of the Supreme Being. These names and forms are there for us to worship. The Supreme Being is without name or form or any other attributes cannot be worshipped directly. So the many forms with names are provided in the scriptures for us to choose one that appeals to us (called Ista Devata) and worship. As pointed out earlier, these forms being those of the Supreme Being only, their worship amounts to the worship of the Supreme Being and as a result confers all benefits. These benefits flow from the Supreme Being only. BG (7-21, 22).

ಯೋ ಯೋ ಯಾಂ ಯಾಂ ತನುಂ ಭಕ್ತಃ ಶ್ರದ್ಧಯಾರ್ಚಿತುಮಿಚ್ಛತಿ |

ತಸ್ಯ ತಸ್ಯಾಚಲಾಂ ಶ್ರದ್ಧಾಂ ತಾಮೇವ ವಿದಧಾಮ್ಯಹಮ್ ||

ಸ ತಯಾ ಶ್ರದ್ಧಯಾ ಯುಕ್ತಸ್ತಸ್ಯಾರಾಧನಮೀಹತೇ |

ಲಭತೇ ಚ ತತಃ ಕಾಮಾನ್ ಮಯೈವ ವಿಹಿತಾನ್ ಹಿ ತಾನ್ ||

We also hear that Devi Kamakshi (Durga only) worshipped Siva in Kanchipuram and in Chennai in the Kapaleeswara temple. We may come across stories of Siva praising Vishnu and the other way also. Thus

there is nothing wrong in the seemingly contradictory stories. Each one is meant to highlight the glory of a particular form in a deity. The idea is that one who feels attracted to a particular form may use the hymn to sing the praise of the deity. Ultimately he will go up in the spiritual ladder and realise that names and forms are superficial only and really make no difference. All the glories narrated in all the hymans refer to the one Supreme Being that masquerades as so many deities.

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