

CHAPTER 4

The Rishi said:



1-2. When that most valiant but evil-natured Mahisasura and the army of that foe of the devas were destroyed by the Devi, Indra and the hosts of devas uttered their words of praise, their necks and shoulders reverently bent, and bodies rendered beautiful with horripilation and exultation.

3. ‘To that Ambika who is worthy of worship by all devas and sages and pervades this world by her power and who is the embodiment of the entire powers of all the hosts of devas, we bow in devotion. May she grant us auspicious things!

4. ‘May Chandika, whose incomparable greatness and power Bhagavan Vishnu, Brahma and Hara are unable to describe, bestow her mind on protecting the entire world and on destroying the fear of evil.

5. ‘O Devi, we bow before you, who are yourself good fortune in the dwellings of the virtuous, and ill-fortune in those of the vicious, intelligence in the hearts of the learned, faith in the hearts of the good, and modesty in the hearts of the high-born. May you protect the universe!

6. ‘O Devi, how can we describe your inconceivable form, or your abundant surpassing valour that destroys the asuras, or your wonderful feats displayed in battles among all the hosts of gods, asuras and others?

7. ‘You are the origin of all the worlds! Though you are possessed of the three gunas you are not known to have any of their attendant defects (like passion)! You are incomprehensible even to Vishnu, Shiva and others! You are the resort of all! this entire world is composed of an infinitesimal portion of yourself! You are verily the supreme primordial Prakriti untransformed.

8. ‘O Devi, you are Svaha at whose utterance the whole assemblage of gods attains satisfaction in all the sacrifices. You are the Svadha which gives satisfaction to the manes. Therefore you are chanted (as Svaha and Svadha in Sacrifices) by people.

9. ‘O Devi, you are Bhagavati, the supreme Vidya which is the cause of liberation, and great inconceivable penance (are the means for your realization). You (the supreme knowledge) are

cultivated by sages desiring liberation, whose senses are well restrained, who are devoted to Reality, and have shed all the blemishes.

10. 'You are the soul of Sabda-Brahman. You are the repository of the very pure Rig-veda and Yajus hymns, and of Samans, the recital of whose words is beautiful sith the Udgitha! You are Bhagavati embodying the three Vedas. And you are the sustenance whereby life is maintained. You are the supreme destroyer of the pain of al the worlds.

11. 'O Devi, you are the Intellect, by which the essence of all scriptures is comprehended. You are Durga, the boat that takes men across the difficult ocean of worldly existence, devoid of attachments. You are Shri who has invariably taken her abode in the heart of Vishnu. You are indeed Gauri who has established herself with Shiva.

12. 'Gently smiling, pure, resembling the full moon's orb, beautiful like the splendour of excellent gold was your face! Yet it was very strange that, being swayed by anger, Mahisasura suddenly struck your face when he saw it.

13. 'Far strange it is that after seeing your wrathful face, O Devi, terrible with its frowns and red in hue like the rising moon, that Mahisasura did not forthwith give up his life! For, who can live after beholding the enraged Destroyer?

14. 'O Devi, be propitious. You are Supreme. If enraged, you forthwith destroy the (asura) families for the welfare (of the world). This was known the very moment when the extensive forces of Mahisasura were brought to their end.

15. 'You who are always bounteous, with whom you are well pleased, those (fortunate ones) are indeed the object of esteem in the country, theirs are riches, theirs are glories, and their acts of righteousness perish not; they are indeed blessed and possessed of devoted children, servants and wives.

16. 'By your grace, O Devi, the blessed individual does daily all righteous deeds with utmost care and thereby attains to heaven. Are you not, therefore O Devi, the bestower of reward in all the three worlds?

17. 'When called to mind in a difficult pass, you remove fear for eve3ry person. When called to mind by those in happiness, you bestow a mind still further pious. Which goddess but you, O Dispeller of poverty, pain and fear, has an ever sympathetic heart for helping everyone?

18. 'The world attains happiness by the killing of these (foes) and though these (asuras) have committed sins to keep them long in hell, let them reach heaven by meeting death eventually at he battle (with me)- thinking thus, that you, O Devi, certainly destroy our enemies.

19. 'Don't' you reduce to ashes all asuras by mere sight? But you direct your weapons against them so that even the inimical ones, purified by the missiles, may attain the higher worlds. Such is your most kindly intention towards them.

20. 'If the eyes of the asuras had not been put out by the terrible flashes of the mass of light issuing from your sword or by the copious lustre of your spearpoint, it is because they saw also your face resembling the moon, giving out (cool) rays.

21. 'O Devi, your nature is to subdue the conduct of the wicked; this your peerless beauty is inconceivable for others; your power destroys those who have robbed the devas of their prowess, and you have thus manifested your compassion even towards the enemies.

22. 'What is your prowess to be compared to? Where can one find this beauty (of yours) most charming, (yet) striking fear in enemies?

Compassion in heart and relentlessness in battle are seen, O Devi, O Bestower of boons, only in you in all the three worlds!

23. 'Through the destruction of the enemies all these three worlds have been saved by you. Having killed them in the battle-front, you have led even those hosts of enemies to heaven, and you have dispelled our fear from the frenzied enemies of the devas. Salutation to you!

24. 'O Devi, protect us with your spear. O Ambika, protect us with your sword, protect us by the sound of your bell and by the twang of your bow-string.

25. 'O Chandika, guard us in the east, in the west, in the north and in the south by the brandishing of your spear. O Iswari!

26. 'Protect us and the earth with those lovely forms of yours moving about in the three worlds, as also with your excludingly terrible forms.

27. 'O Ambika, protect us on every side with your sword, spear and club and whatever other weapons your sprout-like (soft) hand has touched.'

The Rishi said:

28-30. Thus the supporter of the worlds was praised by the devas, worshipped with celestial flowers that blossomed in Nandana and with perfumes and unguents; and with devotion all of them offered her - heavenly incense. Benignly serene in countenance she spoke to all obeisant devas.

The Devi said:

31-32. 'Choose all of you, O devas, whatever you desire of me. (Gratified immensely with these hymns, I grant it with great pleasure)'

The devas said:

33-34. 'Since our enemy, this Mahisasura, has been slain by Bhagavati (i.e you) everything has been accomplished, and nothing remains to be done.

35. 'And if a boon is to be granted to us by you, O Mahesvari, whenever we think of you again, destroy our direct calamities.

36-37. 'O Mother of spotless countenance, and whatever mortal shall praise you with these hymns, may you, who have become gracious towards us, be also for his increase in this wealth, wife, and other fortunes together with riches, prosperity and life, O Ambika!'

The Rishi said:

38-39. O King, being thus propitiated by the devas for the sake of the world and for their own sake, Bhadrakali said, 'Be it so' and vanished from their sight.

40. Thus have I narrated, O King, how the Devi who desires the good of all the three worlds made her appearance of yore out of the bodies of the devas.

41-42. And again how, as a benefactress of the devas, she appeared in the form of Gauri for the slaying of wicked asuras as well as Sumbha and Nisumbha, and for the protection of worlds, listen as I relate it. I shall tell it to you as it happened.

Here ends the fourth chapter called " " of the Devi-mahatmya in Markandeya-purana during the period of Savarni, the Manu.