

Sophia, Cosmic Consciousness of the Goddess

By: Olivia Robertson

2. Mystical Awakening of Aries and Durga

ORACLE OF THE GODDESS DURGA

PRIESTESS: Divine Goddess Durga, come to our aid! We are weak: encompass us with Thy strength. We are set upon by formidable foes: protect us. We are utterly downcast by the evil forces that bring destruction to our home, the earth. Fight our foes of violence, cruelty and folly with Thy ten radiating arms that purge the world of sin and death!

ORACLE: The foes that you fight are within. For nothing can assault you from without, unless you open the gates of your soul through like-minded evil. For evil calls to evil, as good calls to good. In reality the wickedness you fear is but the distortion of the good and you fight your own fearful shadow! Your enemies are the mirror-reflections of yourselves. Enter then the realms of reality and lo - the earth is saved! For the true earth is inviolate.

Yet you do well to seek me and to invoke my almighty power. It is through spiritual acts of will that the soul wins freedom. For the wicked, whether fallen angel or human, have lost free will. Freedom has to be fought for or it is lost. At first the evil doer practises vices, acts of cruelty and destruction. But inevitably vice, cruelty and destruction become forces that possess his soul, and he degenerates into a machine, prey to manipulation of every sort.

Each soul should be the cause of effects, rather than a mere automaton obeying every wanton impulse or surge of group hysteria. Yet the divine paradox is that a soul may only be dominant over this world of illusions, if in turn that soul is acted upon by Deity! Whatever religion you practise, the divine inspiration working through your true conscience will bring you to your goal of immortal love and life. Yet to follow such divine promptings requires such strength of will, such endurance, such courage and intuition that few attain reality in one life-time. Know that no words, no formulated beliefs and well thought out systems of theology or philosophy gain the blessing of the Deities, unless these are manifested as activities. Think peace, fight for peace! Love others - feed the hungry! Believe in freedom - be free through using your true Will! Then you, like Myself, will radiate the glory of achievements in many fields. But remember that you have many lives, many selves. I am Devi, who manifests as the gentle Parvati, golden Uma and the black Kali.

I am Goddess of expanding Powers! Yet I receive harmony of My many aspects through the Cosmic Goddess, Devi.

ON A SAFFRON DRAPED ALTAR LET THERE BE FIVE RED LIGHTED CANDLES, BURNING INCENSE, A VESSEL OF WATER AND A STAR MAP OF ARIES. UNCARDED WOOL PLAITED WITH GOLD CORD REPRESENTS THE GOLDEN FLEECE. 3 PRIESTESSES WEAR GOLD RAYED CROWNS, YELLOW ROBES WITH GOLD STOLES AND HOLD GOLD WANDS TIPPED WITH DIAMONDS. 3 PRIESTS WEAR GOLD CONE HEADDRESSES, SCARLET ROBES, GOLD STOLES AND HOLD BRONZE CROOKS. 10 COMPANIONS ARE SIMILARLY ATTIRED EXCEPT FOR STOLES: 4 STAND AT CARDINAL POINTS MARKED BY 4 RED CANDLES.

1st PRIEST: Companions, on the quest for the Golden Fleece of Love and Life, know that Aries the Ram is Shepherd of the Starry Flock, leading the Zodiac procession round the encircling year! Shining unattainably in the bright sky are the gold cloud sheep of Phoebus Apollo. The flock's Ram bore Helle

and her brother Phrixus on his back as they flew from the wrath of their step-mother Ino. Alas, Helle flew into the sea, hence called the Hellespont. "First Golden Aries shines, who whilst he swam lost part of his freight, and gave the sea a name". To this constellation belongs the starry Shepherd, Tammuz Dumuzi. As he sank to his death into the Western Sky Ocean, he was rescued by Ishtar, Goddess of the eight-pointed star Sirius. The mighty Amon-Ra, Ram God of the Egyptians, reigns in this House. He is also the Agnus Dei, the Easter Lamb. His is the Golden Fleece.

1st PRIESTESS: The Goddesses also have the courage and glory of Aries! Divine Minerva was honoured at this time at Her Festival, the Quinquatrus. Victors in contests of music and games were presented with vessels of oil and crowns of olives, grown in Her Grove of Academus. As Pallas Athena, Her Spring Panathenaea was celebrated by a joyful procession bearing her embroidered saffron peplum to the Parthenon, there to be lain upon the statue of the Goddess, and strewn with Spring flowers. In the Panathenaic frieze old men and women lead the ritual carrying olive branches of peace, and men in their prime follow with shields and spears. Foreigners carry little boats and women bear water-pots. Young men crowned with millet sing hymns to the Goddess, and Virgins carry baskets of sacred objects. All these and ourselves honour the Goddess of a Thousand Works.

2nd PRIEST: Let us venerate also Cybele, Bona Dea: The Goddess Oestre of Easter and the Milesian Princesses, Te-a and Te-phi, who, during the season of Alban Eiler, founded Tara and there lighted the sacred fire. At the Spring Equinox millions in India still celebrate the ancient Festival of Lights, Huli. The flames of myriad lamps float upon rivers and so bring Fire and Water, Love and Truth into harmony. So be it within ourselves.

3rd PRIEST: (*HOLDS BURNING INCENSE N.E.*) I offer incense to the God Aries. "Aries, exceeding in strength, chariot-rider, golden-helmed, doughty in heart, Saviour of Cities, Thou art harnessed in bronze, strong of arm, mighty with the spear! O defence of Olympus. Thou art Father of victory, ally of Themis, stern governor of the rebellious, Leader of righteous men, sceptered King of manliness. Thou doth whirl Thy fiery sphere among the planets in their sevenfold courses through the aether, wherein Thy blazing steeds ever bear Thee above the third firmament of heaven! Harken to us, Helper of us all! Shed down a kindly ray from above upon our lives, that we may be able to drive away bitter cowardice from our heads and crush down the deceitful impulses of our souls! Restrain also the keen fury of our hearts which provoke us to tread the ways of blood shedding war! Rather, O Blessed God, give you us boldness to abide within the harmless ways of peace, avoiding war and hatred and the violent friends of death."

3rd PRIESTESS: (*OFFERS INCENSE S.W.*) I offer incense to Pallas Athena. "I sing of Pallas Athena, the Glorious Goddess, bright-eyed, inventive, unbending of heart, pure Virgin, saviour of cities, courageous, Tritogeneia. She descended upon the awful head of Zeus Himself and sprang forth arrayed in warlike arms of flashing gold, and awe seized all the Gods as They gazed! But Athena sprang quickly from the immortal Head and stood before Zeus who holdeth the aegis, and She shook Her sharp spear. Great Olympus reeled before the might of the bright-eyed Goddess, and earth round cried fearfully, and the sea was moved and tossed with dark waves, while foam burst forth suddenly. The bright Son of Hyperion stopped his swift-footed horses a long while, until the Maiden Pallas Athena had stripped the heavenly armour from Her immortal shoulders. And wise Zeus was glad." Self-born Goddess Parthenos, descend upon us with Wisdom and life-giving power! But temper Thy rays with compassion and veil the snake crowned Head of Medusa, which is Thy Shield and Mystery.

2nd PRIEST: (*OFFERS INCENSE AT N.*) I offer incense to the God Amon-Ra. "Homage to Thee, Amon-Ra, in thy risings of beauty. The Gods rejoice when They see Thee rise and when Thy beams flood the World with light. Thy majesty goeth forth and advanceth even unto the land of Manu. Thou passest over the height of heaven and Thy heart is full of gladness. Thy Sektet boat draweth on with fair winds, Thy divine boat advanceth in peace. Thy Mother is Nuit, and the Lady of Life, Divine Isis, rejoiceth in Thee. O Thou perfect One, O Thou who dost endure, who suffereth never an evil moment, who canst not be smitten down by him that doeth deeds of might, none other shall have power and might over the things

which belong to Thee! Homage to Thee, Thou beautiful face by reason of Thy two great plumes! Awake O Lord of Beauty, at dawn when the company of the Gods and mortals say unto Thee, 'Hail!' O Thou glorious Being, Thou dost renew Thyself in Thy season in the form of the Disk within the Goddess Hathor. The Goddess Mayet embraceth Thee at all times. Thou illuminest the two lands with rays of turquoise light!" Grant us that we may be as those who are Thy favoured ones!

2nd PRIESTESS: (*OFFERS INCENSE AT S.*) I offer incense to the Goddess Muth. We hail Thee, Queen of Heaven, Goddess Muth, who maketh the souls strong and who maketh sound body, and who delivereth men from the abode of the fiends which is in the evil chamber. Thou art the Mother of the Gods and brought them forth Osiris as firstborn of the five Gods, and created their beauties and fashioned their members. The Sacred Vulture belongeth unto Thee and Thy sister is Nehkebet. Thy Consort is Amon-Ra and from Thee cometh the rising of the waters of the great river and plenteous crops. Bring us peace and bounty and assuage the fierce anger of Thy Divine Husband Horus. Protect us from all harm as the vulture protecteth her young. May we shelter beneath Thy all-encompassing wings.

1st PRIEST: (*OFFERS INCENSE W.*) I offer incense to the God Rudra. We honour Thee, Thou swarthy Deity of wild empire, who rideth upon the boar. Thou art Lord of Cattle and all wild creatures. Thou art the Divine Archer who shooteth Thine arrows of disease and death at those marked out for retribution. Thou art also the Divine Physician, renowned for Thy healing arts, brilliant as the sun, shining like gold, best and most beautiful of the Gods. Thy Mother is Ushas of the Golden Dawn, and Thy Father is the God Prajapati. Lord of Beasts, bestow on us strength and healing power.

2nd PRIEST: I sing the Hymn to the Maruts, the Rudras, Thy Sons. "When You thus from afar cast forward Your measure, like a blast of fire, through whose wisdom is it, through whose design? To whom do Ye go, Ye shakers of the earth? When You overthrow what is form, and whirl about what is heavy, You pass through the trees of the earth, through the clefts of the rocks. You have harnessed the spotted deer to Your chariots, a red deer as leader. Even the Earth listens at Your approach. O Rudras, we quickly desire Your aid for our race! Come now to us with help, as of yore. For You, worshipful and wise, have wholly protected Kanva. Come to us with Your whole protection, as quickly as lightnings come after the rain! Bounteous Givers, Ye possess whole strength, whole powers, Ye shakers of the earth."

1st PRIESTESS: (*OFFERS INCENSE E.*) I offer incense to Thee, the Goddess Durga. We adore Thee, Thou self-born Goddess, who appeared fully grown, a beautiful yellow woman with ten arms, riding upon a tiger. Thou art sprung from flames and art Devi, the Most Holy Goddess in Her Form of Fire. Thy radiations cleanse us from all evil and each shaft of Thy power hath many Names; the discus of Vishnu: the trident of Shiva: the conch shell of Varuna: Agni's flaming dart: Vayu's bow: Surya's quiver and arrow: Yama's iron rod: the Thunderbolt of Indra: Kubera's Club: a garland of snakes from Sheshu. Thus art Thou strong with all the attributes of the Gods and wieldeth the Powers of Sun and Moon and the Sacred Elements.

2nd PRIESTESS: With Thy almighty strength Thou dost overcome the impious. Thou doth conquer those who change the courses of rivers for foolish purposes, and who make fire lose its potency and the stars to be hidden. Thou hast a thousand arms when Thou overcomest evil forces who attack the Deities. Thou hast the Divine Power of Creation, for Thou has Produced nine million Beings from Thine own body that they might overcome evil! Thou hast drawn Goddesses from Thy divine hair! Yet with love, when evil is destroyed, Thou receiveth sinners within Thine own Sacred Body, that they may achieve rebirth. Durga Devi, protect our souls from evil desires and sinful deeds.

1st PRIEST: Let us invoke the Star Guardians of Aries!

1st COM. (*N.E.*): I hail the Guardians of the Star Hamal, the Ram's Horn, Proclaimer of the Dawn, Messenger of Light, Star of the Flocks! To Hamal were Temples of Zeus and Pallas Athena oriented. Bestow on us fore-knowledge of things to come.

2nd COM. (S.E.): I hail the Guardians of the Stars Sharatan and Sheratan, the Ram's Head. You who are the Ashwins, the Horsemen, the pearly-white Protecting Pair, guard us on our quest for Love and Life.

3rd COM. (S.W.): I hail the Guardians of the double star, Mesarthim, Body of the Lion, who sent forth a wondrous comet. Help us to be prepared for that which is to come.

4th COM. (N.W.): I hail the Guardians of Botein, Tail of the Ram, the twofold star, from whence come the beautiful meteors, the Arietids of autumn. Shower us with the inspiration that creates beauty.

1st PRIESTESS: Companions, let us perform the circle dance of the Zodiac Flock, led by Ishtar and Her lover, the Shepherd Tammuz-Dumuzi.

MUSIC: RAVEL'S "BOLERO" IS SUITABLE. 3rd PRIESTESS AND PRIEST LEAD THE DANCE. GOLD POWER UP THE SPINE AND IN SOLAR PLEXUS MAY BE FELT AND YELLOW AND ROSE AURAS SEEN. POWER IS CIRCULATED THROUGH DANCERS LIGHTLY TOUCHING HANDS. AT THE END DANCERS HOLD ARMS ALOFT AND DRAW POWER DOWN THROUGH THEMSELVES INTO THE EARTH: THEN DRAW IT TO PLEXUS AND HEART.

1st PRIESTESS: Wisdom is needed that we may tread the path to our goal with success. Athena's Owl sees in the dark!

3rd PRIESTESS (HANDS ROUND VESSEL OF WATER TO ALL AND AS THEY DRINK SHE SAYS TO EACH): Receive this water from the Well of Wisdom.

2nd PRIEST: Harken to the words of Aeon, Bard of Eire:

"Who art Thou, O Glory, in flame from the deep,
Where stars chant their story; why trouble my sleep?
I hardly had rested, my dreams wither now.
Why comest Thou, crested and gemmed on Thy brow?"

2nd PRIESTESS: "Up, Shadow, and follow, the way I will show.

The blue-gleaming hollow tonight thou shalt know.
And rise mid the vast to the fountain of days,
From whence we had passed to the parting of ways."

2nd PRIEST:

"I know Thee, O Glory, thine eyes and Thy brow,
With White Fire all hoary, come back to me now!
My glory has dwindled, my azure and gold.
Yet you keep enkindled the sunfire of old."

2nd PRIESTESS:

"Why tremble and weep now, whom stars once obeyed?
Come forth to the deep now and be not afraid,
A diamond is burning in deeps of the Lone,
Thy Spirit returning may claim for its throne.
Come, lay thy poor head on My Heart where it glows,
With Love ruby-red on thy heart with its woes.
In flame-fringed islands its sorrows shall cease,
Absorbed in the silence and quenched in the peace."

3rd PRIEST: Let us remember Jason and his Argonauts and their quest for the Golden Fleece - which is in verity the gold of the Inner Sun.

3rd PRIEST AND PRIESTESS (*HAND ROUND THE GOLDEN FLEECE, PLACING IT IN EACH LAP WITH THESE WORDS*): Psyche found the Golden Fleece as sheeps' wool caught on sunny thorn hedges!

1st PRIESTESS (*HOLDS ALOFT STAR MAP*): Companions, let us contemplate the sign of Aries and the neighbouring constellations. Above Aries shines heavenly Andromeda and beyond her is her Mother, Cassiopeia upon her throne. Behold, the hero Perseus flies across the sky to rescue Andromeda from a sea monster: She is borne by the wings of Hermes, who bears the Shield of Pallas Athena. He uncovers it and reveals the shining snake rays upon Medusa's Head, and so turns to stone the whale, Cetus, with its writhing starry coils rising from the deeps. Andromeda is saved and rises in the sky towards Perseus. Her body holds a great wonder: a spiral galaxy, sister to our Milky Way. Above Aries is Triangulum the pasture-land of the Oxen of the Sun. In silence let us contemplate the Mystery of Aries and Durga.

CONTEMPLATION: RAYS OF POWER ARE SENT FORTH FOR LOVE, ENERGY AND HEALING. REPORTS OF EXPERIENCES.

1st PRIEST: Companions, let us give thanks to Durga and Rudra, Muth and Amon-Ra, Pallas Athena and Aries.

End of Rite.

Sources: 'The Vedas,' Max Muller, Indological Book House, Delhi. 'Indian Mythology', Veronica Ions, Hamlyn. 'The Goddesses of India, Tibet, China and Japan', Durdin-Robertson, Cesara. 'The Book of the Dead', Wallis Budge, Routledge and Kegan Paul. 'Egyptian Mythology', Richard Patrick, Octopus Books. 'Song and its Fountains', A.E. Aeon MacMillan. 'Homer's Hymns', Heinemann-Harvard. (N.B. "Star Names, Their Lore and Meaning," Richard Hinckley Allen, Dover Publications, New York, 1899; "Juno Covella, Perpetual Calendar of The Fellowship of Isis", Lawrence Durdin-Robertson, Cesara Publications; and Philips "Planisphere" were used for each Rite.)

<p>Copyright Notice: The FOI Liturgy from this website is copyright protected. Copying the Liturgy text or pages to another website or publication, is prohibited. Printing of individual rites by FOI members for their personal and group ritual use is encouraged and allowed.</p>
--