

## Durga Saptashati

### Samputa nirṇaya

शतमादौ शतं चान्ते जपेन्मन्त्रं नवाक्षरम् ।  
चण्डीसप्तशतीमध्ये संपुटोऽयमुदाहृतः ।  
सकामैः संपुटो जाप्यो निष्कामैः संपुटं विना ॥

There are various schemes of samputa in caṇḍī vidhi. Some are samputas for the entire hymn while some others are for each individual verse of saptaśatī. The most common scheme is one where the navākṣarī mahāmantra is recited 108 times at the beginning and end of saptaśatī. Such use of samputa is generally for sakāma pakṣa . Those reciting the hymn mainly for ātmalābha need not follow the samputīkaraṇa scheme using navārṇa mantra.

There are four recognized ways of samputīkaraṇa of saptaśatī using navārṇa mahāmantra. They are:

1. Reciting 108 navārṇa mantras at the beginning and end of the entire saptaśatī hymn.
2. Reciting 108 navārṇa mantras at the beginning and end of each of the three charitras.
3. Reciting 108 navārṇa mantras at the beginning and end of each of the thirteen chapters of saptaśatī.

4. Reciting navārṇa mantra at the beginning and end of every śloka of saptaśatī.

There are various prayogas which are detailed in tantras such as kātyāyanī, vārāhī and ḍāmara, as also by authorities such as nīlakaṇṭha and nāgojībhaṭṭā some of which are listed below. sampuṭa here means uttering the specific mantra before and after every verse of saptaśatī for all the 700 verses. Let's take the example of sampuṭa with praṇava or Omkāra:

OM + śloka + OM

1. By sampuṭa of sapraṇava vyāhṛtitraya a hundred times, one attains mantra siddhi (OM bhūḥ bhuvaḥ svaḥ + śloka + svaḥ bhuvaḥ bhūḥ OM)

2. By reciting sapraṇava vyāhṛtitraya at the beginning of every śloka, one attains mantra siddhi.

3. By sampuṭa of sapta vyāhṛti (OM bhūḥ bhuvaḥ svaḥ maḥ janaḥ manaḥ tapaḥ satyaṃ), one attains mantra siddhi.

4. By sampuṭa of gāyatrī mantra along with sapta vyāhṛti or vyāhṛtitraya, one attains immense merit.

5. By sampuṭa of the mantra jātavedase from the durgā sūkta, one attains all desired fruits.

6. By sampuṭa of śatākṣara tryambaka mantra, one is protected from death and disease. This mantra is formed by combining gāyatrī, jātavedase and tryambaka mantras.

7. By sampuṭa of the śloka *śaraṇāgatadīnārta paritrāṇa parāyaṇe*, one achieves success in all endeavors.

8. By sampuṭa of the śloka *karotu sā naḥ śubhaheturīśvarī*, one attains all desired fruits.

9. By sampuṭa of the śloka *evaṃ devyā varam labdhvā*, one attains all desired boons.

10. By sampuṭa of the śloka *durge smṛtā harati*, one is protected from dangers of all kind.

11. By sampuṭa of the śloka *sarvābādhāpraśamaṃ*, one is freed from afflictions of all kinds. One can also recite this śloka alone for the same purpose.

12. By reciting the śloka *itthaṃ yadā yadā* a lakh times, one is freed from epidemics such as mahāmārī.

13. By reciting the śloka *tato vavre nṛpo rājyaṃ* a lakh times, one gains back lost wealth and position.

14. By offering sadīpa balidāna reciting the śloka, *hinasti daityatejāṃsi*, one is cured of bālagraha.

15. By a combined recitation of the śloka *durge smṛtā harasi* along with the ṛk *yadanti yacca dūrake*, one is speedily freed from all dangers and misery.

16. By sampuṭa of the śloka *jnānināmapī cetāṃsi*, one attains the power of infatuation.

17. By sampuṭa of the śloka *rogānaśeṣān*, one is freed from all diseases.

17. By sampuṭa of the śloka *ityuktvā sā tadā devī*, one is blessed with knowledge.

18. The verse *bhagavtyā kṛtaṃ sarvaṃ* is very potent and confers sarvasiddhi. It can be recited individually as a 112-lettered mahāmantra to accomplish all desires.

16. By sampuṭa of the śloka *devi prapannārtihare prasīda*, one is speedily liberated from dangers and misery of all kinds.

Performing the above prayogas in front of a lamp (durgā dīpanamaskāra) grants very fast results.

**Kavacha, Argalā and Kīlaka**

Recitation of kavacha, argalā and kīlaka is considered mandatory as a part of saptaśatī krama. It is said that Rāvaṇa recited saptaśatī without the kavacha and eventually was slain by śrī Rāma . The Devas worshiped Mahāmāyā for eons to seek protection from a demon named aruṇāsura but did not attain siddhi of saptaśatī due to their omission of not following the due procedure. They were taught the tantra of saptaśatī by brahmā and subsequently earned the grace of parāmbā who assumed the form of bhrāmarī śakti to destroy aruṇāsura.

Argalā was taught by mahāviṣṇu, kīlaka by śiva and kavacha by brahmā. Argalā destroys sins, kavacha protects and kīlaka grants siddhi. Hence it is said:

अर्गला दुरितं हन्ति कीलकं फलदं भवेत् ।  
कवचं रक्षयेन्नित्यं तस्मादेतत् त्रयं पठेत् ।  
जपेत् सप्तशतीं चण्डीं क्रम एष शिवोदितः ॥

अर्गला हृदये यस्य तस्मादर्गलवानसौ ।  
भविष्यति न सन्देहो नान्यथा शिवभाषितम् ॥  
कीलकं हृदये यस्य स कीलितमनोरथः ।  
कवचं हृदये यस्य स वज्रकवचः प्रभुः ॥

## Rules for Recitation

1. One should always recite the entire saptaśatī hymn. If unable to do that, only the madhyama charitra can be recited.
2. One should not break the recitation in the middle of an adhyāya. If such a break occurs, the recitation should be restarted from the beginning of that chapter.
3. One should recite with a calm demeanor without aṅga ceṣṭā such as shaking the head, hands etc.
4. The pace of recitation should neither be too fast, not too slow; every word should be pronounced carefully and with bhakti towards parāmbā.
5. The Stotra should be recited from a book after duly worshiping it and not from memory.
6. The Stotra is to be recited from the book, duly placed on a stool or holder. If the book is held in the hand during recitation, half the merit of the recitation is said to be lost.
7. One attains the full fruit of the recitation by contemplating on the meaning of every verse. If the Stotra is recited without understanding its meaning, complete merit is not attained.

## **The Nine types of Recitation**

There are nine ways to recite caṇḍī based on the order of the charitras.

1. mahāvidyā - The order of recitation is prathama, madhyama and uttama charitra.
2. mahātantrī - The order of recitation is prathama, uttama and madhyama charitra.

3. caṇḍī - The order of recitation is prathama, madhyama and uttama charitra.
4. saptaśatī - The order of recitation is madhyama, prathama and uttama charitra.
5. mṛtasanjīvinī - The order of recitation is uttama, prathama and madhyama charitra.
6. mahācaṇḍī - The order of recitation is uttama, madhyama and prathama charitra.
7. rūpadīpikā - Every verse is recited with the samputīkaraṇa of the verse ‘rūpaṃ dehi jayaṃ dehi yaśo dehi dviṣo jahi’ from argalā, along with the navārṇa mantra.
8. catuṣṣaṣṭiyoginī - Every verse is recited with the samputīkaraṇa of the names of sixty-four yoginī-s using the catuṣṣaṣṭi yoginī stotra.
9. parā - Every verse is recited with the samputīkaraṇa of parā bīja (bālā tṛtīya bīja).

The nine forms of durgā (navadurgā) presiding over these nine types of recitation are: jayā, vijayā, bhadrā, bhadrakālī, sumukhī, durmukhī, prajñā, vyāghramukhī and siṃhamukhī.

There are three other ways to recite saptaśatī:

1. sṛṣṭi krama - This is the normal way to recite, where one starts with the beginning of the first chapter (sāvarṇiḥ sūryatanayo) and ends with the thirteenth chapter (sāvarṇirbhavitā manuḥ).
2. sthiti krama - The recitation starts with the fifth chapter (purā śumbhaniśumbhābhyāṃ) and one recites nine chapters till the

end of thirteenth chapter. Then one starts with the first chapter and continues till the end of fourth chapter (yathāvatkathayāmi te).

3. saṁhāra krama - The recitation starts with the last verse of the thirteenth chapter (evaṁ devyā varaṁ labdhvā) and progresses in the reverse order till the first verse of the very first chapter is reached (sāvarṇiḥ sūryatanayo).

One desirous of wealth, progeny, power etc., adopts the sṛṣṭi krama. Sthiti krama is suitable for all purposes including curing of diseases, graha bādhā etc. Saṁhāra krama is suited for mokṣa and also in times of great distress. This is extremely potent and works faster than most other prayogas. There is a separate sankalpa krama for this where nyasa, dhyana, rishi etc. are reversed.

### **Rātri and Devī sūktas**

Though not considered mandatory like kavacha, argalā and kīlaka, by saṁpuṭīkaraṇa of saptaśatī with these two sūktas, greater benefit is attained. The procedure is to recite the rātri sūkta before saptaśatī and devī sūkta after the recitation of saptaśatī.

रात्रिसूक्तं जपेदादौ मध्ये सप्तशतीस्तवम् ।  
प्रान्ते तु जपनीयं वै देवीसूक्तमिति क्रमः ।  
एवं संपुटितं स्तोत्रं सर्वकामार्थसिद्धिदम् ॥

Some authorities insist that both sūktas are vedic. Some others insist that these sūktas are both to be extracted from within the saptaśatī hymn. Rātri sūkta is extracted from the first chapter (viśveśvarīm jagaddhātrīm) and devī sūkta from the fifth (namo devyai mahādevyai). It is the general practice for traivarṇikas to recite both the vaidika and paurāṇika sūktas. The rest should recite only the paurāṇika sūktas.

Kātyāyanī tantra instructs one to recite the tāntrika (paurāṇika) sūktas during saptaśatī pārāyaṇa and vaidika sūktas during homa and homāṅga pāṭha.

केवलं पाठमात्रे तु तान्त्रिकं सूक्तमुच्यते ।  
होमाङ्गपाठे होमे च वैदिकं तु प्रयोजयेत् ॥

## **Navāṅga and Trayāṅga**

Navāṅga caṇḍī involves nine limbs which are recited before the commencement of saptaśatī :

1. nyāsa
2. āvāhana
3. catuḥṣaṣṭi yoginī nāmāni or cintāmaṇi mahāvidyeśvarī stava
4. argalā
5. kīlaka
6. caṇḍī hrdaya

7. caṇḍikā dala
8. saptaśatī dhyāna
9. caṇḍī kavaca

Trayāṅga krama involves three limbs:

1. kavaca
2. argalā
3. kīlaka

### **Two shorter schemes for recitation**

For those who are genuinely unable to recite the entire hymn of durgā saptaśatī in a single day, the recitation can be spread over multiple days.

The three-day scheme is called kaṅgāLī krama:

Day 1 - kaṃ (1) - first chapter

Day 2 - gā (3) - second, third, fourth chapters

Day 3 - Lī (9) - fifth to thirteenth chapters

The seven-day scheme is called pāṭho.ayaṃ dviprakārataḥ krama:

Sunday - pā (1) - first chapter

Monday - ṭho (2) - second, third chapters

Tuesday - yaṃ (1) - fourth chapter

Wednesday - dvi (4) - fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth chapters

Thursday - pra (2) - ninth, tenth chapters

Friday - kā (1) - eleventh chapter

Saturday - ra (2) - twelfth, thirteenth chapters

## **Order of Recitation**

The generally followed order of recitation for the various limbs of durgā saptaśatī is based on ḍāmara tantra:

1. Kavacha
2. argalā
3. kīlaka
4. Navārṇa mantra japa
5. rātri sūkta
6. saptaśatī
7. devī sūkta
8. Navārṇa mantra japa

## **śāpoddhāra and utkīlana**

There are some specific mantras listed in the tantras for the purposes of śāpoddhāra and utkīlana which are respectively recited seven and twenty-one times before reciting saptaśatī.

ॐ ह्रीं क्लीं श्रीं क्रां क्रीं चण्डिके देवि शापनाशानुग्रहं कुरु कुरु स्वाहा ।

ॐ श्रीं क्लीं ह्रीं सप्तशति चण्डिके उत्कीलनं कुरु कुरु स्वाहा ।

However, according to kātyāyanī tantra, śāpoddhāra is accomplished by reciting the chapters of saptaśatī in the following order: 13, 1, 12, 2, 11, 3, 4, 10, 5, 9, 6, 8, 7, 7 (again). Utkīlana is accomplished by reciting the chapters in the following order: madhyama, prathama and uttama. An alternate scheme of utkīlana involves reciting: kīlaka, madhyama caritra, kavaca, prathama caritra, uttama caritra, argalā and kīlaka.

### **Navarātra kṛtya**

आश्विनस्य सिते पक्षे आरभ्याग्नितिथिं सुधीः ।

अष्टम्यन्तं जपेल्लक्षं दशाम्शं होममाचरेत् ॥

प्रत्यहं पूजयेद्देवीं पठेत् सप्तशतीमपि ।

विप्रानाराध्य मन्त्री स्वमिष्टार्थं लभतेऽचिरात् ॥

During navarātra, one starts from prathamā tithi - and till durgāshṭamī, recites one lakh times the navārṇa mahāmantra. Thus, one would need to recite 12500 repetitions of the mantra per day from pratipat till aṣṭamī. Everyday, one should also worship Caṇḍikā in the yantra as described in rahasyatraya and recite saptaśatī each day. At the end of japa, daśamśa homa is performed using the mūlamantra. On the ninth day, one should perform brāhmaṇa bhojana, kanyā pūjā etc. By doing this, one

earns the grace of caṇḍikā parameśvarī. This is the brief procedure to worship Caṇḍikā during śarannavarātrotsava.

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