
.. ardhanArIshvarastotram with meaning ..

॥ अर्धनारीश्वरस्तोत्रम् सार्थ ॥

चाम्पेयगौरार्धशरीरकायै कर्पूरगौरार्धशरीरकाय ।

धम्मिल्लकायै च जटाधराय नमः शिवायै च नमः शिवाय ॥ १ ॥

One half shines with golden yellow color like chAmpeya flower and other half shines in bright white of karpUra. One side of the head is adorned with a beautiful braided decoration and other sports an unkempt jaTAmakuTam. I bow to ShivA and Shiva in the form of ardhanArishvara.

कस्तूरिकाकुङ्कुमचर्चितायै चितारजःपुञ्जविचर्चिताय ।

कृतस्मरायै विकृतस्मराय नमः शिवायै च नमः शिवाय ॥ २ ॥

The left half of ardhanArIshvara which is occupied by ambAL is adorned with musk and kumkumam. The other half occupied by the Lord is smeared with ashes from the funeral pyre. The ambAL aspect is well adorned and pleasing to reflect on, the Lord's half is ill adorned (with ashes, snakes, elephant skin) is dreadful. I bow to this wonderful form, I bow to ambA ShivA and Lord Shiva.

झणत्क्वणत्कङ्कणनूपुरायै पादाब्जराजत्फणिनूपुराय ।

हेमाङ्गदायै भुजगाङ्गदाय नमः शिवायै च नमः शिवाय ॥ ३ ॥

The left side of the Lord, which is occupied by ambAL is adorned with beautiful kankana (bracelets worn on the wrist) and nUpura (worn at the ankle). These make very pleasing sounds when they move. The right lotus foot is adorned with a cobra as nUpura. angada is an ornament adorning the lower elbows. On the left side it is made of gold and on the right side it is a snake. Such is the wonderful form of the Lord. I bow to shrI shivA and Lord Shiva.

Snakes represent the senses. They are dreadful and lead one to the cycle of death and birth. By wearing snakes, as a yogIshvara, the Lord demonstrates His mastery and control over them.

विशालनीलोत्पललोचनायै विकासिपङ्केरुहलोचनाय ।

समेक्षणयै विषमेक्षणाय नमः शिवायै च नमः शिवाय ॥ ४ ॥

ambAL's eyes are often described as long, extending upto the ears. This is indicated by the term vishAla. Her eyes (left half) are long and beautiful like nilotpala flower. Lords eyes are radiant like lotus flowers. IxaNa can mean look or eye. viShameXana means some thing odd or different to look at or one who has three eyes. sameXana means it is pleasing to look at. "sa ma" means with laxmI, and HER eyes are auspicious and can bestow prosperity to the devotees. The ardhanArIshvara form is a

beautiful combination of ShivA and Shiva. I bow to shrI ShivA and Lord shiva.

(i) The three eyes of Shiva-Shakti svarUpam have many beautiful descriptions in saundaryalaharI. In one verse, the right eye is compared to the sun, the left one is compared to moon and the one of forehead is compared to fire. They respectively produce day, night and the sandhya kAlam.

(I) Once a poetic puzzle was posed to mahAkavi kaLidAsa asking whether someone has seen a flower inside another flower. He replied that the face of a woman is like Lotus flower and her two eyes are like nilotpala flowers. It is traditional to relate woman's eyes with nilotpala flower.

मन्दारमालाकलितालकायै कपालमालाङ्कितकन्धराय ।

दिव्याम्बरायै च दिगम्बराय नमः शिवायै च नमः शिवाय ॥ ५ ॥

ambAL's forehead is adorned with garlands made of mandAram (Hibiscus) and the Lord's neck is adorned with a garland made of skulls. SHE dresses in royal and divine clothes and HE has directions alone as HIS clothes. I bow to shrI ShivA and Lord Shiva. The word digambara indicates that HE does not wear clothes, as a mark of renunciation. The skulls indicate to the devotees that life in a body is transient and impermanent, one day you will have to die, so do not get mixed up with this world. digambara can also mean brahman. How can you clothe something which is the biggest and the greatest. If so one could say then that HE is contained in the dress and not outside it. A similar sentiment is indicated in the Bible, when Jesus says he has no resting place. A principle that pervades everything can have no particular resting place.

अम्भोधरश्यामलकुन्तलायै तटित्प्रभाताम्रजटाधराय ।

निरीश्वरायै निखिलेश्वराय नमः शिवायै च नमः शिवाय ॥ ६ ॥

HER hair is dark like water bearing clouds and HIS jaTa is raised and radiant with a golden hue like a ripe mango fruit (golden color). SHE has none superior to HER and HE is the Lord of all. Such is the wonderful form of ardhanArishvara. I bow to shrI ShivA and Lord Shiva.

प्रपञ्चसृष्ट्युन्मुखलास्यकायै समस्तसंहारकताण्डवाय ।

जगज्जनन्यै जगदेकपित्रे नमः शिवायै च नमः शिवाय ॥ ७ ॥

SHE dances in delight with captivating beauty at face of creation which springs forth from them. His dance of destruction is in fury and the cosmos subsides back in them. SHE is the mother of this world and He is the Father. Such is the wonderful nature of ardhanArIshvara, I bow to shrI ShivA and Lord Shiva.

प्रदीप्तरत्नोज्ज्वलकुण्डलायै स्फुरन्महापन्नगभूषणाय ।

शिवान्वितायै च शिवान्विताय नमः शिवायै च नमः शिवाय ॥ ८ ॥

HER (left half) sparkling ear ring is studded with blazing precious stones and HE (right half) is adorned with a terrifying snake as HIS ear ring. Supreme auspiciousness (which is brahman) is the essence of both shrI ShivA and Lord Shiva. Such is the wonderful form of ardhanArIshvara. I bow to shrI ShivA and Lord Shiva.

एतत्पठेदष्टकमिष्टदं यो भक्त्या स मान्यो भुवि दीर्घजीवी ।

प्राप्नोति सौभाग्यमनन्तकालं भूयात्सदा तस्य समस्तसिद्धिः ॥ ९ ॥

This final verse is the phala shruti of this stotram. (S)He who reads this stotram containing eight verses with bhakti will obtain all (s)he desires, honor, a long life, and all auspicious things for eternity. One who repeats it again and again will attain all powers and perfection.

इति श्रीमत्परमहंसपरिव्राजकाचार्यस्य श्रीगोविन्दभगवत्पूज्यपादशिष्यस्य

श्रीमच्छंकरभगवतः कृतौ अर्धनारीश्वरस्तोत्रम् संपूर्णम् ॥

Thus concludes the ardhanArIshvara stotram, composed by shrI Adi sha.nkarAchArya, disciple of shrI govinda bhagavatpAda.

Encoded and proofread by Sridhar Seshagiri seshagir at egr.msu.edu
Translated by Ravi Mayavaram msr at comco.com

Please send corrections to sanskrit@cheerful.com

Last updated October 3, 2010

<http://sanskritdocuments.org>