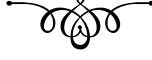

Artiharastotram

ಆರ್ತಿಹರಸ್ತೋತ್ರಂ ಸಾಧರ್

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ಆರ್ತಿಹರಸ್ತೋತ್ರಂ ಸಾರ್ಥ



Artiharastotram by Shri Shridhara Venkatesa.

This is a short poem consisting of nine verses. Herein the poet prays to Lord Shiva to remove the afflictions of the devotee. He asks if it is alright for the Lord not to respond to his prayers when He is reputed to protect those who even think of Him. Then he says that he is just the opposite of the Lord who is omnipotent and omniscient in that he is a weakling and ignoramus. How is it, he asks, that Lord has not taken pity on him. These verses are very moving in their appeal. The poem is a precious gem and the reader would like to add it to the collection of hymns they recite during their prayer.

ಬೋಗಿನಮದಶ್ಲೋಕಾ

.. ಅಥ ಆರ್ತಿಹರಸ್ತೋತ್ರಂ ..

ಶ್ರೀ ಶಂಭೋ ಮಯಿ ಕರುಣಾಶಿಶಿರಾಂ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಂ ದಿಶನ್ ಸುಧಾವೃಷ್ಟಿಂ .
ಸಂತಾಪಮಪಾಕುರುಮೇ ಮಂತಾಪರಮೇಶ ತವ ದಯಾಯಾಃ ಸ್ಯಾಂ .. 1..
ಅವಸೀದಾಮಿ ಯದಾರ್ತಿಭಿರನುಗುಣಮಿದಮೋಕಸೋಂಹಸಾಂ ಖಲು ಮೇ .
ತವ ಸನ್ನವಸೀದಾಮಿ ಯದಂತಕಶಾಸನ ನತತ್ತವಾನುಗುಣಂ .. 2..
ದೇವ ಸ್ಮರಂತಿ ತವ ಯೇತೇಷಾಂ ಸ್ಮರತೋಽಪಿ ನಾರ್ತಿರಿತಿಕೀರ್ತಿಂ .
ಕಲಯಸಿ ಶಿವ ಪಾಹೀತಿಕ್ರಂದನ್ ಸೀದಾಮ್ಯಹಂ ಕಿಮುಚಿತಮಿದಂ .. 3..
ಆದಿಶ್ಯಾಘಕೃತೌ ಮಾಮಂತರ್ಯಾಮಿನ್ನಸಾವಘಾತ್ಮೇತಿ .
ಆರ್ತಿಷುಮಜ್ಜಯಸೇ ಮಾಂ ಕಿಂಬ್ರೂಯಾಂ ತವಕೃಪೈಕಪಾತ್ರಮಹಂ .. 4..
ಮಂದಾಗ್ನೀರಹಂ ತವ ಮಯಿ ಕರುಣಾಂ ಘಟಯಿತುಂ ವಿಬೋನಾಲಂ .
ಆಕೃಷ್ಟಂ ತಾಂತು ಬಲಾದಲಮಿಹ ಮದ್ವೈನ್ಯಮಿತಿ ಸಮಾಶ್ವಸಿತಿ .. 5..
ತ್ವಂ ಸರ್ವಜ್ಞೋಽಹಂ ಪುನರಜ್ಞೋಽನೀಶೋಹಮೀಶ್ವರತ್ವಮಸಿ .
ತ್ವಂ ಮಯಿ ದೋಷಾನ್ ಗಣಯಸಿ ಕಿಂ ಕಥಯೇ ತುದತಿ ಕಿಂ ದಯಾ ನತ್ವಾಂ .. 6..
ಆಶ್ರಿತಮಾರ್ತತರಂ ಮಾಮುಪೇಕ್ಷಸೇ ಕಿಮಿತಿ ಶಿವ ನ ಕಿಂ ದಯಸೇ .
ಶ್ರಿತಗೋಪ್ತಾ ದೀನಾರ್ತಿಹೃದಿತಿ ಖಲು ಶಂಸಂತಿ ಜಗತಿ ಸಂತಸ್ತಾಂ .. 7..

ಪ್ರಹರಾಹರೇತಿವಾದೀ ಘಣಿತಮದಾಖ್ಯ ಇತಿ ಪಾಲಿತೋ ಭವತಾ .
 ಶಿವ ಪಾಹೀತಿ ವದೋಽಹಂ ಶೃತೋ ನ ಕಿಂ ಕ್ವಾಂ ಕಥಂ ನ ಪಾಲ್ಯಸ್ತೇ .. 8..
 ಶರಣಂ ವ್ರಜ ಶಿವಮಾರ್ತಿಸ್ಸತವ ಹರೇದಿತಿ ಸತಾಂ ಗಿರಾಽಹಂ ತ್ವಾಂ .
 ಶರಣಂ ಗತೋಽಸ್ಮಿ ಪಾಲಯ ಖಲಮಪಿ ತೇಷ್ಟೀಶ ಪಕ್ಷಪಾತಾನ್ಮಾಂ .. 9..
 ಇತಿ ಶ್ರೀ ಶ್ರೀಧರವೇಂಕಟೇಶಾರ್ಯಕೃತಿಷು ಆರ್ತಿಹರಸ್ತೋತ್ರಂ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣಂ ..
 ಏಂದ್ರಶ್ಲೋಕ

The author of this poem, Shridhara Venkatesa was a great devotee. He took immense delight

in chanting and singing the names of the Lord. One of the traits of a true devotee is his concern for the welfare of other beings. Krishna mentions (ದಯಾ ಭೂತೇಷು) compassion to

others who are suffering, as one of the noble (ದೈವೀ ಸಂಪತ್) qualities that one should acquire to make spiritual progress. Great devotees like Shridhara have their minds firmly fixed in the Lord and so were not unduly worried about themselves. They knew that Lord will take care of their welfare. Thus, having been freed from worries about their own welfare, they show concern about the welfare of other beings.

They are moved by the sufferings and sorrows of others. Shri Shankaracharya points out this

quality of the great people in Vivekachudamani (37). They have themselves obtained God's grace and liberation. They are willing to help others also without any motive whatsoever. It is in their nature to do good to others. In this they are like the spring season.

ಬೋಗಿನದ್ರಶ್ಲೋಕ

ಶಾಂತಾ ಮಹಾಂತೋ ನಿವಸಂತಿ ಸಂತೋ ವಸಂತವಲ್ಲೋಕಹಿತಂ ಚರಂತಃ .
 ತೀರ್ಣಾ ಸ್ವಯಂ ಭೀಮಭವಾರ್ಣವಂ ಜನಾನಹೇತುನಾನ್ಯಾನಪಿ ತಾರಯಂತಃ ..
 ಏಂದ್ರಶ್ಲೋಕ

The poet Shridhara who was a saintly person had done exactly this in this poem.

Another popular verse from the Subhashita in praise of the hearts of good people says this with a nice example. Normally their hearts are compared to butter since, like the butter they easily melt. But the verse points out that the comparison is not correct. The reason is that the butter melts only when it is exposed to heat. But the hearts of good people melt when they are exposed to other peoples' sufferings. The sanskrit word

for heat is tApa ತಾಪಃ and it also means distress.

Thus there is a pun on the word tApa.

ಬೋಗಿನಮದಶ್ಲೋಕಾ

ಸಜ್ಜನಸ್ಯ ಹೃದಯಂ ನವನೀತಂ ಇತಿ ಯದ್ವದಂತಿ ಕವಯಃ ತದಲೀಕಂ .
ಅನ್ಯದೇಹವಿಲಸದ್ವರಿತಾಪಾತ್ ಸಜ್ಜನೋ ದ್ರವತಿ ನೋ ನವನೀತಂ ..

ಏನದಶ್ಲೋಕಾಬ

Keeping the helplessness of the vast number of people who have chosen to forget the Lord in their concern for their own well being, great saints and acharyas like Shridhara have composed short and long pieces of poems that show us the way to pray and seek His grace. The present piece is one such poem. This is a short poem consisting of nine verses. Herein the poet identifies himself with one such person - a weakling and an ignoramus - and consequently is afflicted with a variety of sorrows and prays to Lord Shiva to remove the afflictions.

ಆರ್ತಿಃ means distress , affliction. Four types of people worship Me, says Krishna in Gita (BG-7-16). The first among them and the most common one is the distressed.

ಚತುರ್ವಿಧಾ ಭಜಂತೇ ಮಾಂ ಜನಾಃ ಸುಕೃತಿನೋಽರ್ಜುನ . ಆರ್ತೋಽಪಿ ಜಿಜ್ಞಾಸುರರ್ಥಾರ್ಥಿ ಜ್ಞಾನೀ ಚ ಭರತರ್ಷಭ ..

The Lord welcomes all of them, calls them virtuous, and says He will respond to their prayers.

In this poem Shridhara appeals to the Lord for redressal of his sufferings.

These verses are very moving in their appeal. The poem is a precious gem and the readers would like to add it to the collection of hymns they recite during their prayer. The translations given are not exact, but will convey the meaning of the verses. Brief notes have also been provided. Some verses from other great acharyas are also given to show the similarity in their thinking. Happily, some of the names used to address the Lord refer to both Shiva and Vishnu and so one can take the verses as appealing to either or both.

The following abbreviations are used in the notes.

1 - VS - Shri Vishnu Sahasranama with Shri Shankaracharya's commentary.

2 - SS - Shri Shiva Sahasranama (from Padma Purana) known as Vedaśara Sahasram with the commentary of HH Shri Paramashivendra Saraswati.

3 - LS - Shri Lalita Sahasranamam with the commentary of Shri Bhaskararaya.

4 - BG - Shrimad Bhagavadgita with Shri Shankaracharya's commentary.

5 - BH - Shrimad Bhagavatam.

6 - AS - Atmarpanastuti by Shri Appayya Dikshitar.

7 - SA - Shiva Ashtottarashata nama stotram with commentary "Shivstattva Rahasyam" by Shri Nilakanta Dikshita.

ಬೋಗಿನಮದಶ್ಲೋಕಾ

.. ಅಥ ಆರ್ತಿಹರಸ್ತೋತ್ರಂ ..

ಶ್ರೀ ಶಂಭೋ ಮಯಿ ಕರುಣಾಶಿಶಿರಾಂ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಂ ದಿಶನ್ ಸುಧಾವೃಷ್ಟಿಂ.
ಸಂತಾಪಮಪಾಕುರು ಮೇ ಮಂತಾ ಪರಮೇಶ ತವ ದಯಾಯಾಃ ಸ್ಯಾಂ .. 1..

ಏಂದಶ್ಲೋಕಾ

Meaning:- O Lord Shambhu! please cast Your vision that is full of nectar like kindness on me and dispel my suffering.

Then only will I understand the truth about Your kind nature.

Note:- The Lord is addressed as ಶಂಭುಃ - ಶಂ ಸುಖಂ ಭಾವಯತಿ ಉತ್ಪಾದಯತೀತಿ ಶಂಭುಃ .

ಶಿವಂಕರ ಇತ್ಯರ್ಥಃ . "ಶಿವ ಏಕೋ ಧೈಯಃ ಶಿವಂಕರಃ" ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತೇಃ . SA(3) and VS(38).

"Shambhu" - the name means one who will remove distress and give happiness.

Since the poet says he is distressed and wants relief he addresses the

Lord appropriately as Shambhu. How does one get distress? It is the consequence of sins committed by one in this or earlier births.

This will be experienced in the form of a variety of sufferings like getting an inferior birth, bad tendencies, sickness, death, being tossed into hell etc.

Devotion to the Lord can make one escape these terrible sufferings. He is known as

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ಭೂರಿಭಾರಾರ್ತಿಹರ್ತಾ . ಅಧಿಕ ಅಸಹ್ಯದುಃಖನಿವಾರಕಃ ಭೂರಿಭಾರಾರ್ತಿಹರ್ತಾ .
ಅವಿದ್ಯಾಸ್ಮಿತ-ರಾಗದ್ವೇಷಾಭಿನಿವೇಶ-ಪುಣ್ಯಾಪುಣ್ಯ-ಮಿಶ್ರಕರ್ಮ
ಗರ್ಭಜನ್ಮ-ಜರಾ-ಮರಣಸ್ಥಾವರ-ನಾರಕದುಃಖ-ರಾಗದ್ವೇಷಾದಿರೂಪ
ಸಂಸಾರ-ಮೋಚಕಃ . ಸ್ವಾಕ್ಷತ್ವಾ ದೇವಂ ಮುಚ್ಯತೇ ಸರ್ವಪಾಪೈಃ - ಇತಿ . SS(563).

ಏಂದಶ್ಲೋಕಾ

Another of His names says He removes the sorrows of His devotees even when He is just thought of.

ಶೋಕನಾಶನಃ - ಸ್ವ ತಿಮಾತ್ರೇಣ ಭಕ್ತಾನಾಂ ಶೋಕಂ ನಾಶಯತೀತಿ ಶೋಕನಾಶನಃ
 . (VS-632)

Next, the poet describes the eye sight of the Lord. The eyes are cooling, implying they are comforting. Just as the moon light is soothing and brings relief to people who have been scorched by the sun's heat during the day time, the sight of the Lord's eyes brings immense relief to the people who are suffering from a variety of causes. As said earlier the word ತಾಪಃ means both heat and affliction. So, the poet prays to the Lord to dispel his sufferings by casting His eyes on him. Shiva is the repository of mercy, compassion. Shiva's sight is comforting because they are overflowing with compassion. He has many names that allude to His kindness.

Some of them are:- ದಯಾಳುಃ - ದಯಾಶೀಲೋ ದಯಾಳುಃ . SS (155).

ಕೃಪಾನಿಧಿಃ - ಕೃಪಾ ಪರದುಃಖಪ್ರಹಾಣೇಚ್ಛಾ, ತಸ್ಯಾ ನಿಧಿರಿತ್ಯನೇನ ಸದಾ ವರ್ತಮಾನತ್ವಮುಕ್ತಂ ಭವತಿ .

ತಚ್ಚಿವಸ್ಯ ಶ್ರುತಿಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧಂ “ಅರ್ಹನ್ನಿದಂ ದಯಸೇ ವಿಶ್ವಮಬ್ಭವಂ .
 ನ ವಾ ಓಜೀಯೋ ರುದ್ರ ತ್ವದಸ್ತಿ” ಇತಿ . sa (30).

The Navavarṇaratnamala mentions that Shiva's eyes are brimming with compassion and as a result are moist. ಕ್ಲಿನ್ನೇಕ್ಷಣಮತಿಕೃಪಯಾ .

The Lord's vision is also like nectar. The word ಅಮೃತಂ or “Nectar” is used to refer to anything that is extraordinarily lovely or beneficial. Nectar is reputed to be the drink of the gods and it confers on them freedom from sickness and old age. So, it is considered to be great. But it cannot confer immortality. The Gita says that the gods like Indra and Brahma will be reborn and come down to the earth when their quota of merit is expended.

ಆಬ್ರಹ್ಮಭುವನಾಲ್ಲೋಕಾಃ ಪುನರಾವರ್ತಿನೋಽರ್ಜುನ . BG(8-16)

But the sight from the Lord is incomparably superior to the nectar.

The Lord is reputed to have most auspicious eyes as they can not only remove sorrows of His devotees, but also confer all that is good including immortality. So He has the name ಶುಭೇಕ್ಷಣಃ - ಈಕ್ಷಣಂ ದರ್ಶನಂ ಯಸ್ಯ ಶುಭಂ ಶುಭಕರಂ, ಮುಮುಕ್ಷುಣಾಂ ಮೋಕ್ಷದಂ, ಭೋಗಾಧೀನಾಂ ಭೋಗದಂ, ಸರ್ವಸಂದೇಹ-ವಿಚ್ಛೇದಕಾರಣಂ, ಪಾಪಿನಾಂ ಪಾವನಂ, ಹೃದಯಗ್ರಂಥೀರ್ವಿಚ್ಛೇದಕರಂ, ಸರ್ವಕರ್ಮಣಾಂ ಕ್ಷಪಣಂ, ಅವಿದ್ಯಾಯಾಶ್ಚ ನಿವರ್ತಕಂ ಸ ಶುಭೇಕ್ಷಣಃ . VS(393).

Those eyes can give liberation to those who seek liberation, worldly pleasures to those who seek them, destroy the sins of the sinners, clarify all doubts, remove the knot of ignorance in the mind and dissolve the pile of accumulated karmas. Shri Lalita also has a name that implies this meaning. She is known as ಭವದಾವಸುಧಾವೃಷ್ಟಿಃ . ಭವಃ ಸಂಸಾರ ಏವ ದಾವೋ ವನವಕ್ಷಿಃ ತಸ್ಯ ಶಾಮಕತ್ವಾತ್ಸುಧಾವೃಷ್ಟಿಃ ಪೀಯೂಷವರ್ಷಮಿವ . LS(741). She

is like a shower of nectar that puts out the forest fire of cyclic existence (i.e) endless cycle of rebirth.

The question that arises now is what should one do to make the Lord look at him? Should one have to try hard and do anything extraordinarily difficult to get His favour? NO. It is very easy to please Him. Krishna has said that He accepts with delight a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water offered by a devotee. BG(9-26).

ಪತ್ರಂ ಪುಷ್ಪಂ ಫಲಂ ತೋಯಂ ಯೋ ಮೇ ಭಕ್ತ್ಯಾ ಪ್ರಯಚ್ಛತಿ .
ತದಹಂ ಭಕ್ತ್ಯುಪಹೃತಮಶ್ನಾಮಿ ಪ್ರಯತಾತ್ಮನಃ ..

Accordingly Shiva is pleased when He is offered some water or even some grass (like the panic grass considered sacred and fit for offering to deities).

This is implied in His name.

ಕಾರುಣ್ಯನಿಧಿಃ - ಕಾರುಣ್ಯಂ ಕೃಪಾ ಅಸ್ಮಿನ್ನಿಧೀಯತೇ ಇತಿ ಕಾರುಣ್ಯನಿಧಿಃ .
ಅತಿಸುಲಭ-ಚುಲುಕ ಜಲ, ದೂರ್ವಾದಿ, ತೃಣಸ್ವೀಕಾರೇಣ ಭೋಗ-ಮೋಕ್ಷಪ್ರದತ್ವಾತ್

“ದಲಂ ಕಿಂಚಿತ್ಸಮಾದಾಯ ಚುಲುಕಂ ಜಲಮೇವ ವಾ .
ಯೋ ದತ್ತೇ ನಿಯಮೇನಾಸೌ ತಸ್ಮೈ ದತ್ತೇ ಜಗತ್ತಯಂ” - ಇತಿ ..
ಶಿವಗೀತಾಯಾಂ .. “ಘೃಣಿನ ಕಪರ್ದಿನ” ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ . SS(872).

The devotee Shri Appayya Dikshitar regrets that even after knowing the fact that it is very easy to please the Lord with such simple offerings and get even salvation in return, he failed to worship Him as he was a slave to senses and consequently is hastening towards his downfall.

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ಅರ್ಕ-ದ್ರೋಣ-ಪ್ರಭೃತಿಕುಸುಮೈಃ ಅರ್ಚನಂ ತೇ ವಿಧೇಯಂ
ಪ್ರಾಪ್ಯಂ ತೇನ ಸ್ಮರಹರ ಫಲಂ ಮೋಕ್ಷನಾಮ್ರಾಜ್ಯಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೀಃ .
ಏತಜ್ಞಾನನ್ನಪಿ ಶಿವ ಶಿವ ವ್ಯರ್ಥಯನ್ಮಾಲಮಾತ್ಮನಾ

ಆತ್ಮದ್ರೋಹೀ ಕರಣವಿವಶೋ ಭೂಯಸಾಽಧಃ ಪತಾಮಿ .. AS(8)

ಏಂದಶ್ಲೋಕ

The poet Shridhara accepts the fact that he had committed many sins in the following verse and totally surrenders to Him saying "I am Yours now."

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ಅವಸೀದಾಮಿ ಯದಾರ್ತಿಭಿಃ ಅನುಗುಣಮಿದಂ ಓಕಸೋಂಹಸಾಂ ಖಲು ಮೇ .
ತವ ಸನ್ನವಸೀದಾಮಿ ಯದಂತಕಶಾಸನ ನೈತತ್ತವಾನುಗುಣಂ .. 2..

ಏಂದಶ್ಲೋಕ

Meaning:- O Lord, I am suffering as the consequence of numerous sins committed by me. But, I am yours now. So, if I am suffering in this manner it does not behoove Your greatness.

Note:- It is clear that one should not commit acts of sin. But it is in human nature, an inborn weakness to commit sins.

But we have heard of expiatory rites (known as ಪ್ರಾಯಶ್ಚಿತ್ತ ಕರ್ಮಾಣಿ).

Can not we resort to them and get rid of our sins? No, say the shastras.

These rites like performing some sacrifices, giving alms and gifts to deserving people, going on pilgrimages etc., are no doubt efficacious and will wipe off the sins. But, they are not comparable to devotion to the Lord in efficiency.

This fact is repeatedly stressed in Shri Bhagavatam.

ಬೋಗಿನಮದಶ್ಲೋಕ

ಯಮಾದಿಭಿಯೋಗಪಥೈಃ ಕಾಮಲೋಭಹತೋ ಮುಹುಃ .

ಮುಕುಂದಸೇವಯಾ ಯದ್ವತ್ತಧಾಽತ್ಮಾನ್ಯದ್ಧಾ ನ ಶಾಮ್ಯತಿ .. BH(1-6-36)

ವಿದ್ಯಾತಪಃ ಪ್ರಾಣನಿರೋಧಮೈತ್ರಿ ತೀರ್ಥಾಭಿಷೇಕ-ವ್ರತದಾನಜಪೈಃ .

ನಾತ್ಯಂತಶುದ್ಧಿಂ ಲಭತೇಽಂತರಾತ್ಮಾ ಯಥಾ ಹೃದಿಸ್ಥೇ ಭಗವತ್ಯನಂತೇ .. BH(12-3-48).

ಏಂದಶ್ಲೋಕ

These verses say that learning (studying texts), regulation of breath, kindliness, pilgrimages, gifts, repetition of mantras - none of these practices can purify the mind (that is smitten by likes, dislikes, anger etc.) so efficiently as the constant remembrance of the Lord. The reason is simple.

These expiatory rites, while they are capable of removing some sins, do not make the mind give up its inherent tendencies (called vAsanA-s).

The senses will continue to exert their pull, and consequently we will,

before long, fall a victim to their wiles. Even wise persons are helpless as the senses are very powerful. Krishna points out this in Gita.(2-60).

ಯತತೋ ಹೃಪಿ ಕೌಂತೇಯ ಪುರುಷಸ್ಯ ವಿಪಶ್ಚಿತಃ .

ಇಂದ್ರಿಯಾಣಿ ಪ್ರಮಾಥೀನಿ ಹರಂತಿ ಪ್ರಸಭಂ ಮನಃ ..

The mind is powerfully influenced by evil tendencies inherited from previous births. So, attempts to restrain or mend its ways will not yield success easily.

ಸದೃಶಂ ಚೇಷ್ಟತೇ ಸ್ವಸ್ಯಾಃ ಪ್ರಕೃತೇರ್ಜ್ಞಾನವಾನಪಿ .

ಪ್ರಕೃತಿಂ ಯಾಂತಿ ಭೂತಾನಿ ನಿಗ್ರಹಃ ಕಿಂ ಕರಿಷ್ಯತಿ .. BG(3-33).

This is discussed at length in Book six in the story of Ajamila.

The King Parikshit brings up the point giving the example of an elephant.

The elephant goes to a river for a bath. After enjoying a long bath,

it gets out. On going to the bank of the river it will toss

mud all over its body and get dirty again. Similarly, if the the mind is

left to itself, it will go in its old ways.

ಕ್ಷಚಿನ್ನಿವರ್ತತೇಽಭದ್ರಾತ್ ಕ್ವಚಿಚ್ಚರತಿ ತತ್ಪುನಃ .

ಪ್ರಾಯಶ್ಚಿತ್ತಮತೋಽಪಾರ್ಥಂ ಮನ್ಯೇ ಕುಂಜರಸೌಚವತ್ . BG(6-1-10)

Then, is there no way to get rid of our sins? The only way is to tie the

mind to God by developing devotion to Him. The sage Shuka answers this by

narrating the story of Ajamila. A part of the story is a dialogue between the

messengers of the Lord and messengers of Yama. The following verses are

from the explanation given by the former about expiatory rites. The

translation given is not exact but gives the meaning of the verses.

ನೈಕಾಂತಿಕಂ ತದ್ಧಿಕ್ಕತೇಽಪಿ ನಿಷ್ಕ್ರತೇ ಮನಃ ಪುನರ್ಧಾವತಿಚೇದಸತ್ಪಥೇ .

ತತ್ಕರ್ಮನಿರ್ಹಾರಮಭೀಪ್ಸತಾಂ ಹರೇರ್ಗುಣಾನುವಾದಃ ಖಲು ಸತ್ತ್ವಭಾವನಃ ..

BH(6-2-12)

The process of expiation cannot be considered complete if one's mind runs

back to its evil ways after it is completed. Because of this reason,

for those who want the eradication of the stock of their sins the uttering of

the glory of the Lord is the only remedy since it undoubtedly purifies the mind.

ಗುರೂಣಾಂ ಚ ಲಘೂನಾಂ ಚ ಗುರೂಣಿ ಚ ಲಘೂನಿ ಚ .

ಪ್ರಾಯಶ್ಚಿತ್ತಾನಿ ಪಾಪಾನಾಂ ಜ್ಞಾತ್ವೋಕ್ತಾನಿ ಮಹರ್ಷಿಭಿಃ .. BH(6-2-16)

The great sages have prescribed arduous and easy processes of expiation for

the case of serious and small sins.

ತೈಸ್ತಾನ್ಯಘಾನಿ ಪೂಯಂತೇ ತಪೋದಾನಜಪಾದಿಭಿಃ . ನಾಧರ್ಮಜಂ ತದ್ಧೃದಯಂ
ತದಪೀಶಾಂಘ್ರಿಸೇವಯಾ .. BH(6-2-17)

The processes of expiation, such as penance, charity and chanting of prayers, do no doubt get rid of the sins. But the vestige in the form of impressions which is traceable to the unrighteous acts remains. These impressions (vAsanA-s ವಾಸನಾ) too are eradicated by devotion to the Lord's feet.

The Narayaneeyam states this succinctly as follows. (22-7).

ಶ್ರುತಿಸ್ಮತ್ಪ್ರಾಂ ವಿಹಿತಾ ವ್ರತಾದಯಃ ಪುನಂತಿ ಪಾಪಂ ನ ಲುನಂತಿ ವಾಸನಾಂ .
ಅನಂತಸೇವಾ ತು ನಿಶ್ಕಂತತಿ ದ್ವಯೀಮಿತಿ ಪ್ರಭೋ ತ್ವತ್ಪುರುಷಾ ಬಭಾಷಿರೇ ..

The austerities like fasting etc., prescribed in the scriptures will destroy sins but not the impressions. But service to the Lord destroys both the sins and impressions.

Because of this fact, saints and acharyas have sought God's mercy to overcome their problems with their minds. The great acharya Shri Vedanta Desika in his Nyasa Dasakam (8) pleads to the Lord and says "You have to forgive my sins and make them inoperative. And also please make sure I do not again indulge in such sinful activities in future. It is possible for You to do this as You are all powerful and known to be the reservoir of mercy."

Thus he shows the way to pray.

ತ್ವದೇಕರಕ್ಷಸ್ಯ ಮಮ ತ್ವಮೇವ ಕರುಣಾಕರ . ನ ಪ್ರವರ್ತಯ ಪಾಪಾನಿ ಪ್ರವೃತ್ತಾನಿ
ನಿವರ್ತಯ ..

It is because of this fact that Lord is known as Hari - one who removes sins of those who surrender to Him.

ಹರಿಃ . ಹರಿತಿ ಪಾಪಾನಿತಿ . SA(96) and VS(359) -

ಸ್ಮೃತಿಮಾತ್ರೇಣ ಪುಂಸಾಂ ಪಾಪಂ ಸಂಸಾರಂ ವಾ ಹರಿತೀತಿ .

also as ಪಾಪನಾಶಕರಃ . ಲೌಕಿಕವೈದಿಕ-ನಾಮಭಿಃ ಕೀರ್ತಿತಃ, ತಥಾ ಲೌಕಿಕವೈದಿಕೈಃ
ಸ್ತೋತ್ರೈಸ್ತುತಃ

ತಥಾ ಪಂಚಾಕ್ಷರಾದಿಭಿಃ ಜಪ್ತಃ ಪೂಜಿತಶ್ಚ ಉಮಾಸಹಾಯತ್ವಾದಿರೂಪೇಣ
ಸ್ಮೃತೋ ಧ್ಯಾನೇನ ವಾ

ಪಾಪನಾಶಕರಃ . SS(355). Whether His names are uttered or praised by hymns or remembered by chanting mantras like the panchAkShara or worshipped or

meditated upon He removes the sins. ತವಾಸ್ಮಿ "I am yours now" These words should at once bring to our mind the famous assurance of the Lord, in His incarnation as Rama, given when Vibhishana surrendered to Him. Rama proclaimed (Yuddha Kanda- 18-33): ಸಕೃದೇವ ಪ್ರಪನ್ನಾಯ ತವಾಸ್ಮೀತಿ ಚ ಯಾಚತೇ . ಅಭಯಂ ಸರ್ವಭೂತೇಭ್ಯೋ ದದಾಮ್ಯೇತದ್ ವ್ರತಂ ಮಮ ..

"I assure security from all beings to him who comes to me once and asks for protection saying "I am yours". This is my vow."

Shri Appayya Dikshita also says "I am no doubt a sinner, easily yielding to sense pleasures, always transgressing the scriptural injunctions, petty minded, not having even a trace of merit and so on. But now I have surrendered at Your feet. It is not proper on Your part to ignore me now."

ಬೇಗಿನmedshloka

ಪಾಪಿಷ್ಠೋಽಹಂ ವಿಷಯಚಪಲಃ ಸಂತತದ್ರೋಹಶಾಲೀ
ಕಾರ್ಪಣ್ಯೈಕಸ್ಥಿರನಿವಸತಿಃ ಪುಣ್ಯಗಂಧಾನಭಿಜ್ಞಃ .
ಯದ್ಯಪ್ಯೈವಂ ತದಪಿ ಶರಣಂ ತ್ವತ್ಪದಾಬ್ಜಂ ಪ್ರಪನ್ನಂ
ನೈನಂ ದೀನಂ ಸ್ಮರಹರ ತವೋಪೇಕ್ಷಿತುಂ ನಾಥ ಯುಕ್ತಂ .. AS(28).

ಏಂದshlokab

Why does the poet say that his suffering does not behoove Shiva's greatness?
Shiva is addressed here by Shridhara as ಅಂತಕಶಾಸನಃ . one who controls Yama - the god of death. This implies that by getting His grace and protection one can escape even death as the sage Markandeya did. The fear of death is the worst suffering any living being can experience. But Yama himself is afraid of Lord Shiva. So Shiva has the names kAlakAla and Mrityunjaya.

ಕಾಲಕಾಲಃ . ಕಾಲಯತಿ ನಾಶಯತೀತಿ ವ್ಯುತ್ಪತ್ತ್ಯಾ ಕಾಲೋ ಯಮಃ, ತಸ್ಯಾಪಿ ಕಾಲಃ, ಕಾಲಯಿತಾ ಉಪಸಂಹರಕಃ ಇತಿ . SA (29).

and ಮೃತ್ಯುಂಜಯಃ . ಮೃತ್ಯುಃ ಮರಣಂ ಸ್ವಭಕ್ತಾನಾಂ ಮೃತ್ಯುಂ ಜಯತಿ ಸ್ತೋಪಾಸನಯಾ ಪರಿಹರತೀತಿ ಮೃತ್ಯುಂಜಯಃ .

"ತ್ಯಂಬಕಂ ಯಜಾಮಹೇ ಸುಗಂಧಿಂ ಪುಷ್ಪಿವರ್ಧನಂ .

ಉರ್ವಾರುಕಮಿವ ಬಂಧನಾನ್ಮೃತ್ಯೋರ್ಮುಕ್ಷೀಯ ಮಾಮೃತಾತ್" . ಇತಿ

"ಯಸ್ಮಿನ್ಯುಕ್ತಾ ಖೂಷಯೋ ದೇವತಾಶ್ಚ ತಮೇವ ಜ್ಞಾತ್ವಾ ಮೃತ್ಯುಪಾಶಾಂಭಿನತ್ತಿ" ಇತಿ ಶ್ರುತೇಶ್ಚ . SA (71) and SS(123).

Yama being the destroyer of everything is known as kAla. Even Yama is destroyed

by Him and so Shiva is known as kAlakAla.

ಬ್ಱೇಗಿನmedshloka

ದೇವ ಸ್ಮರಂತಿ ತವ ಯೇ ತೇಷಾಂ ಸ್ಮರತೋಽಪಿ ನಾರ್ತಿರಿತಿ ಕೀರ್ತಿಂ .
ಕಲಯಸಿ ಶಿವ ಪಾಹೀತಿ ಕ್ರಂದನ್ ಸೀದಾಮ್ಯಹಂ ಕಿಮುಚಿತಮಿದಂ .. 3..

ಏಂದshlokab

Meaning:- O Lord, I have heard that those who think of You do not get exposed to suffering. I am crying “Shiva! save me, and still continue to suffer.

Is this proper?

Note:- As said earlier, Shiva has the name Hari. The name means that he removes the sins of even those whose hearts are loaded with evil tendencies.

ಹರಿಃ . “ಹರಿಹರತಿ ಪಾಪಾನಿ ದುಷ್ಟಚಿತ್ತೈರಪಿ ಸ್ಮೃತಃ” ಇತಿ .

SS(542). Thus the author should not have been exposed to suffering.

How to express the fact that “I have surrendered to You and am yours now”?

This is answered by saying that I am crying and saying “Shiva, save me.”

Keeping this idea in the mind, we have the habit of saying the following verse at the end of our daily puja or prayer

ಅನ್ಯಥಾ ಶರಣಂ ನಾಸ್ತಿ ತ್ವಮೇವ ಶರಣಂ ಮಮ .

ತನ್ಮಾತ್ ಕಾರುಣ್ಯಭಾವೇನ ರಕ್ಷ ರಕ್ಷ ಮಹೇಶ್ವರ ..

‘O Lord, Maheshvara! I have no recourse other than You.

So, out of mercy, please protect me.’

ಬ್ಱೇಗಿನmedshloka

ಆದಿಶ್ಯಾಘೃತೌ ಮಾಮಂತರ್ಯಾಮಿನ್ನಸಾವಘಾತ್ಮೇತಿ.

ಆರ್ತಿಷುಮಜ್ಜಯಸೇ ಮಾಂ ಕಿಂಬ್ರೂಯಾಂ ತವಕೃಪೈಕಪಾತ್ರಮಹಂ .. 4..

ಏಂದshlokab

Meaning:- You are my inner Self. This being so, it is clear that it is by Your inducement only I committed various sins and as the result am now suffering.

What can I say in this matter? I deserve to be the recipient of Your grace.

Note:- An important qualification of one who claims to be the Lord’s devotee is to desist from acts prohibited in the scriptures as wrong and sinful.

The scriptures were given out by the Lord Himself. So, violating the

scriptural injunctions amounts to disobeying His orders and as a result

become a serious offence. This being so, how can one say ‘I am a sinner’

and claim to be a devotee and have surrendered to Him? The author puts forth a specious explanation to justify his sins of omission and commission. We too would have heard the same statements from some people. They say that God is behind every act and thought of ours. The upanishads and Gita too have some statements that seem to support this view. For example, Krishna said that different kinds of dispositions of beings, such as intelligence, wisdom, non-illusion, patience, truth, self-restraint, calmness, pleasure, pain, birth, death, fear, security, innocence, equanimity, contentment, austerity, beneficence, fame, shame all arise from Him, the Lord alone. (BG 10-4,5).

ಬೋಗಿನಮದಶ್ಲೋಕಾ

ಬುದ್ಧಿಜ್ಞಾನಮಸಂಮೋಹಃ ಕ್ಷಮಾ ಸತ್ಯಂ ದಮಃ ಶಮಃ .
ಸುಖಂ ದುಃಖಂ ಭವೋಽಭಾವೋ ಭಯಂ ಚಾಭಯಮೇವ ಚ ..
ಅಹಿಂಸಾ ಸಮತಾ ತುಷ್ಟಿಸ್ತಪೋ ದಾನಂ ಯಶೋಽಯಶಃ .
ಭವಂತಿ ಭಾವಾ ಭೂತಾನಾಂ ಮತ್ತ ಏವ ಪೃಥಗ್ವಿಧಾಃ .

ಏಂದಶ್ಲೋಕಾ

This being so, should not He be held responsible for whatever good or evil one does? The answer is that no doubt He is the cause behind all our mental dispositions. But He is the general cause, or the ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ ಕಾರಣಂ . but our own deeds are responsible for our individual dispositions. An analogy will make it easier to understand. People plant different kinds of seeds on the earth. The earth supports all of them and they grow. But only a coconut tree comes out of a coconut seed, a mango tree out of a mango seed and so on. Thus, the earth is the general cause and the respective seeds are the special cause, or the ವಿಶೇಷ ಕಾರಣಂ . In the same way, The Lord is the general cause, supporting all dispositions and our own deeds or karmas are the special cause. So, it is said that ಬುದ್ಧಿಃ ಕರ್ಮಾನುಸಾರಿಣೀ . or one's thinking is shaped by his deeds. God is behind the power to think, but responsibility to use the power properly and take the right decisions rests with the individual eventually. We may think of another example - a car. The car in the hands of a careful driver can take the passengers safely to places they want to reach. But the same car in the hands of a rash and negligent driver will become a vehicle of accident or even death. We cannot hold the car responsible for the accident.

It just provides the motive power.

The result, a safe journey or an accident is in the hands of the driver. God has given us intelligence. We have to use it to travel in the right path shown by the scriptures. Because of this reason, the intellect is often compared to a driver. ಬುದ್ಧಿಂ ತು ಸಾರಥಿಂ ವಿಧಿ says the Kathopanishad. (1-3-3)

The author of the popular hymn Sharada Bhujangam presents this situation from another angle, that is interesting to read. He is addressing Sharada Devi.

He says that, if She does not come to his rescue and relieve the distress in his heart, then She too will suffer since She is present in his heart, as in the hearts of all beings!

ಯದಿ ತ್ವಂ ಮದೀಯಂ ಶುಚಂ ನಾಪನುದ್ಯಾಃ ತದಾ ದುಃಖವಕ್ಷಿಪ್ರತಪ್ತೇಽನ್ತರಂಗೇ .
ಮದೀಯೇ ಸ್ಥಿತಾಯಾಸ್ತವಾಪ್ಯಂಬ ಖೇದೌ ಭವಽದಿತ್ಯಹಂ ಚಿಂತಯಾಽಽತೋಽಸ್ಮಿ
ಭೂಯಃ ..

ಬ್ಱೇಗಿನmedshloka

ಮಂದಾಗ್ರಣೀರಹಂ ತವ ಮಯಿ ಕರುಣಾಂ ಘಟಯಿತುಂ ವಿಬೋ ನಾಲಂ.
ಆಕೃಷ್ಟಂ ತಾಂ ತು ಬಲಾತ್ ಅಲಮಿಹ ಮದ್ವೈನ್ಯಮಿತಿ ಸಮಾಶ್ವಸಿಮಿ .. 5..
ಏಂದshlokab

Meaning:- I am a dullard, and the foremost one at that. I have not known how to be worthy of Your grace and hence took the wrong path. I am just a wretched person. You should thrust Your grace on me and save me.

Note:- After putting forth the plausible argument, the author immediately feels remorseful and prays to the Lord to save him.

Why should the poet call himself a dull witted person?

The word “dullard” or ಮಂದಃ has a special meaning in the vedantic parlance. It is used to refer to one who lacks discrimination and does not have the wisdom to make the right choice when several options are open to him. For example, when a child is asked to choose between a big colorful baloon and a hundred rupees note, it will go for the baloon only. This is because the baloon appears colorful and it can derive joy by playing with the baloon. The child, being immature cannot understand the value of the currency note. Similarly, our scriptures present two options to us. One is the path that provides for material benefits that can provide worldly enjoyment. The

other is the path that shows the way to benediction or blessedness that can give lasting happiness. But the latter being not visible and immediately available, most opt for the first path that seems to give happiness here while living.

The scriptures say that such people are immature and lack deep wisdom. This is because the happiness one can get in this world is short lived. They will come to an end some day. And they are not unmixed with sorrow. So, they cannot be termed as real joy. Whereas the path that leads to God assures lasting peace and happiness though the results may not be evident here and now. Because of these reasons people who have not studied the scriptures deeply and lack full faith in what they say, stay away from the superior path shown by them. Yama, the god of death, says this to his student Nachiketas in Kathopanishad. (1-2-2).

ಶ್ರೇಯಶ್ಚ ಪ್ರೇಯಶ್ಚ ಮನುಷ್ಯಮೇತಸೌ ಸಂಪರೀತ್ಯ ವಿವಿನಕ್ತಿ ಧೀರಃ .
ಶ್ರೇಯೋ ಹಿ ಧೀರೋಽಭಿ ಪ್ರೇಯಸೋ ವೃಣೀತೇ ಪ್ರೇಯೋ ಮಂದೋ
ಯೋಗಕ್ಷೇಮಾತ್ ವೃಣೀತೇ ..

How do such “dull witted” people spend their time? Shri Bhagavata says that they slog in pursuit of wealth, security etc. But these things so earned cannot assure happiness or security. So, the text terms the effort spent in search of money and such material gains as “frivolous pursuits” and calls these people as “unfortunate ones.” They work hard during the day and by the end of the day they are totally exhausted. So, they drop off to sleep. Thus their lives are frittered away in sleep by night and in frivolous pursuits by day.

They miss the very goal of life. BH(1-16-9)

ಮಂದಸ್ಯ ಮಂದಪ್ರಜ್ಞಸ್ಯ ವಯೋ ಮಂದಾಯುಷಸ್ಯ ಚ .
ನಿದ್ರಯಾ ಹ್ರಿಯತೇ ನಕ್ತಂ ದಿವಾ ಚ ವ್ಯರ್ಥಕರ್ಮಭಿಃ .

God is the power behind the mind as said earlier. But He had also given us scriptures to guide our conduct. They clearly state what constitutes the right deed and what acts are prohibited and so to be given up. One who wants to grow spiritually and seek the Lord’s grace should use his discretion and take the right path. Krishna says this to Arjuna and points out that if one still takes to neglect the scriptural injunctions under the impulse of desire or greed he will not attain happiness in this world nor the higher worlds. BG-(16-23,24).

ಯಃ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರವಿಧಿಮುತ್ಸೃಜ್ಯ ವರ್ತತೇ ಕಾಮಕಾರತಃ . ನ ಸ ಸಿದ್ಧಿಮವಾಪ್ನೋತಿ ನ ಸುಖಂ ನ ಪರಾಂ ಗತಿಂ ..

ತಸ್ಮಾಚ್ಛಾಸ್ತ್ರಂ ಪ್ರಮಾಣಂ ತೇ ಕಾರ್ಯಕಾರ್ಯ-ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥಿತೌ . ಜ್ಞಾತ್ವಾ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರವಿಧಾನೋಕ್ತಂ ಕರ್ಮ ಕರ್ತುಮಿಹಾರ್ಹಸಿ ..

The sages have also said this in their Smriti texts. Sage Yagnavalkya had said in his work thus -

ವಿಹಿತಸ್ಯಾನನುಷ್ಠಾನಾತ್ ನಿಂದಿತಸ್ಯ ಚ ಸೇವನಾತ್ . ಅನಿಗ್ರಹಾಚ್ಛೇಂದ್ರಿಯಾಣಾಂ ನರಃ ಪತನಮೃಚ್ಯತಿ ..

By failing to do the prescribed duties,

by doing deeds that are prohibited by the scriptures and by not having control over the senses one seeks his fall. Keeping this in mind, Shri Vedanta Desika admits his failings and prays to the Lord. (Nyasa Dasakam. 9). He says -

ಅಕೃತ್ಯಾನಾಂ ಚ ಕರಣಂ ಕೃತ್ಯಾನಾಂ ವರ್ಜನಂ ಚ ಮೇ . ಕ್ಷಮಸ್ವ ನಿಖಿಲಂ ದೇವ ಪ್ರಣತಾರ್ತಿಹರ ಪ್ರಭೋ ..

You, the Lord known to be the one who removes the sufferings of the devotees who surrender to You, have to pardon me for committing the acts prohibited by the scriptures and failure to perform those acts that are prescribed by the scriptures. Shri Appayya Dikshitar also appeals to the Lord to excuse his transgressions that he had made knowingly. He is going about without shame or fear of the consequences of such transgressions. And he says he had done so in his previous births also. He wonders how he can get away from his innumerable problems without Lord's grace.(AS-11).

ಬೋಗಿನmedshloka

ಉಲ್ಲಂಘ್ಯಾಜ್ಞಾಮುಡುಪತಿಕಲಾಚೂಡ ತೇ ವಿಶ್ವವಂದ್ಯ

ತ್ಯಕ್ತಾಚಾರಃ ಪಶುವದಧುನಾ ಮುಕ್ತಲಜ್ಜಶ್ಚರಾಮಿ .

ಏವಂ ನಾನಾವಿಧಭವತತಿಪ್ರಾಪ್ತದೀರ್ಘಾಪರಾಧಃ

ಕ್ಲೇಶಾಂಭೋಧಿಂ ಕಥಮಹಮೃತೇ ತ್ವತ್ಪ್ರಸಾದಾತ್ತರೇಯಂ ..

ಏಂದshlokab

Mind is known as one of the organs like the eyes and ears. The word mind is used to refer to the intellect, memory and the capacity to recollect also according to the context. Only, it being invisible is called an inner organ and it leads the external organs to act according to its dictates. Because our

mind is scattered in many directions due to our attachments and vicissitudes in our lives it is restless. It is difficult to control and focus it on a specific object like God. Even the great warrior Arjuna had accepted this fact and said that the mind is indeed restless, turbulent, strong and obstinate. Therefore it is virtually impossible to restrain it. It is as difficult as restraining the wind.

ಬೋಗಿನಮದಶ್ಲೋಕಾ

ಚಂಚಲಂ ಹಿ ಮನಃ ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಪ್ರಮಾಥಿ ಬಲವದ್ ದೃಢಂ .

ತಸ್ಯಾಹಂ ನಿಗ್ರಹಂ ಮನ್ಯೇ ವಾಯೋರಿವ ಸುದುಷ್ಕರಂ .. BG (6-34).

ವಿಂದಶ್ಲೋಕಾ

A question may arise at this point that if the mind is so difficult to control, but is fickle and insubordinate why have we been provided with such an instrument? The reason is that, though the mind may be turbulent and difficult to control, it is a powerful instrument given to us. The minds of the animals have vastly reduced capacity compared to our minds. They are controlled by instincts and have no free will. The animal birth is meant solely to expiate for the sins committed in the previous births. In such a birth one cannot do acts, like going to the temples and offering prayers to the Lord, that will improve its quality of life in the ensuing births. On the other hand, we can do all of them. Using the free will we may discard courses that are not beneficial to us and choose the path that appears right to us. Thus, God has blessed us with a powerful organ with which we can achieve great goals. The greatest goal, said in our scriptures is mokSha or liberation from cyclic existence. This can be attained by humans only. To help us to achieve this objective, the kindly God has also given us scriptures which talk in detail about the way to attain the goal. Since all of us cannot be expected to read and understand the texts, He has also sent us great saints who are willing to guide us. We are only required to heed their advice, get hold of the mind and channelise it towards God. It is admittedly a difficult task. The task is comparable to capturing a wild elephant and taming it. The elephant is a very strong animal. But, once it is tamed, it can be trained to do very difficult jobs. Our mind is like the wild elephant - difficult to train. If we try hard and

tame it and train it to do our bidding it can lead us to liberation itself.

So the upanishad says:

ಮನ ಏವ ಮನುಷ್ಯಾಣಾಂ ಕಾರಣಂ ಬಂಧಮೋಕ್ಷಯೋಃ . ಬಂಧಾಯ
ವಿಷಯಾಸಕ್ತಂ ಮುಕ್ತಂ ನಿರ್ವಿಷಯಂ ಸ್ಮೃತಂ ..

Mind is the cause for both bondage and liberation. Attached to the objects it becomes the cause for bondage. Freed of attachments it becomes source of freedom. It is in our power to realise the wrong deeds we commit. We have to stay away from such acts in future.

ಬೋಗಿನಮದಶ್ಲೋಕಾ

ತ್ವಂ ಸರ್ವಜ್ಞೋಽಹಂ ಪುನರಜ್ಞೋಽನೀಶೋಹಮೀಶ್ವರತ್ವಮಸಿ.

ತ್ವಂ ಮಯಿ ದೋಷಾನ್ ಗಣಯಸಿ ಕಿಂ ಕಥಯೇ ತು ದತಿ ಕಿಂ ದಯಾ ನತ್ವಾಂ .. 6..

ವಿದಶ್ಲೋಕಾ

Meaning:- I confess I am an ignoramus and a weakling. In contrast, You are omniscient and omnipotent. Because of Your omniscience You are aware of my faults.

What shall I say? Does not Your compassion prod You to overlook my faults?

Note:- By saying that he is ignoramus, the author implies that the teachings of the holy texts have not fully sunk in his mind. As a result his mind still lacks total faith in the teachings of the sacred books and saints. It is wavering and has many doubts. Such people will encounter difficulty in the path of spiritual progress. Krishna says this. BG(4-40).

ಅಜ್ಞಶ್ಚಾಶ್ರದ್ಧಧಾನಶ್ಚ ಸಂಶಯಾತ್ಮಾ ವಿನಶ್ಯತಿ .

ನಾಯಂ ಲೋಕೋಽಸ್ತಿ ನ ಪರೋ ನ ಸುಖಂ ಸಂಶಯಾತ್ಮನಃ ..

By saying he is a weakling the poet is referring not to physical weakness but to that of the mind. A weak mind is not settled in a particular pursuit but goes after many objects. It had been doing so not only in this birth but in the innumerable births we had prior to this present birth also. It is not used to being controlled. When the mind is not under control, it is easily swayed by emotions like desire or anger. One whose mind is thus out of control cannot be expected to have discrimination and judgement. Krishna said:
ಇಂದ್ರಿಯಾಣಾಂ ಹಿ ಚರತಾಂ ಯನ್ಮನೋನುವಿಧೀಯತೇ .

ತದಸ್ಯ ಹರತಿ ಪ್ರಜ್ಞಾಂ ವಾಯು-ರ್ನಾವಮಿವಾಂಭಸಿ .. BG (2-67)

The upanishads state this clearly. They say that the supreme Being cannot be

obtained by one without strength of mind. He should have his goal clearly in mind and work for it with determination.

ನಾಯಮಾತ್ಮಾ ಬಲಹೀನೇನ ಲಭ್ಯಃ . MU (3-2-4) and again in Kathopanishad (1-3-24).

Yama says that the Supreme Being is not obtained by one who has not abandoned evil conduct, whose is not calm, who has not subdued his senses and mind, though the person be endowed with sharp intellect.

ನಾವಿರತೋ ದುಶ್ಚರಿತಾನ್ನಾಶಾಂತೋ ನಾಸಮಾಹಿತಃ . ನಾಶಾಂತಮನಸೋ ವಾಪಿ ಪ್ರಜ್ಞಾನೇನೈನಮಾಪ್ನುಯಾತ್ ..

So, it is very necessary to get control over it and turn it to the other direction, namely the spiritual path.

The poet said that his mind is still not fully established in the Lord's feet.

So he still has a long way to travel before he can call himself a devotee. We should remember here that the author Shridhara is saying this as our representative.

ಬ್ಱೇಗಿನಮದಶ್ಲೋಕಾ

ಆಶ್ರಿತಮಾರ್ತತರಂ ಮಾಮುಪೇಕ್ಷಸೇ ಕಿಮಿತಿ ಶಿವ ನ ಕಿಂ ದಯಸೇ.

ಶ್ರಿತಗೋಪ್ತಾ ದೀನಾರ್ತಿಹೃದಿತಿ ಖಲು ಶಂಸಂತಿ ಜಗತಿ ಸಂತಸ್ತಾಂ .. 7..

ಏಂದಶ್ಲೋಕಾ

Meaning:- I depend on You. Still why do You ignore me? Cannot You show some mercy towards me? The saintly people say that You take care of those who depend upon You and remove the distress of those who are destitute and helpless.

Note:- God had assured this in Gita. (9-22).

ಅನನ್ಯಾಶ್ರಿತಯಂತೋ ಮಾಂ ಯೇ ಜನಾಃ ಪರ್ಯುಪಾಸತೇ .

ತೇಷಾಂ ನಿತ್ಯಾಭಿಯುಕ್ತಾನಾಂ ಯೋಗಕ್ಷೇಮಂ ವಹಾಮ್ಯಹಂ ..

Shri Shankaracharya puts this idea in a very nice way in his Shivanandalahari (14).

He says that he is the foremost among the weak and destitute. And Shiva is renowned to be the protector of the weak and destitute. Thus there exists a unique relationship between them. Because of this reason, his protection is the responsibility of Shiva. HE has to overlook all his weaknesses and faults and save him.

ಬ್ಱೇಗಿನಮದಶ್ಲೋಕಾ

ಪ್ರಭು-ಸ್ತ್ವಂ ದೀನಾನಾಂ ಖಲು ಪರಮಬಂಧುಃ ಪಶುಪತೇ

ಪ್ರಮುಖ್ಯೋಹಂ ತೇಷಾಮಪಿ ಕಿಮುತ ಬಂಧುತ್ವಮನಯೋಃ .

ತ್ವಯೈವ ಕ್ಷಂತವ್ಯಾ ಶಿವ ಮದಪರಾಧಾಶ್ಚ ಸಕಲಾಃ

ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಾತ್ಕರ್ತವ್ಯಂ ಮದವನಮಿಯಂ ಬಂಧುಶರಣಿಃ ..

ಏಂದಶ್ಲೋಕ

ಬೋಗಿನಮದಶ್ಲೋಕ

ಪ್ರಹರಾಹರೇತಿ ವಾದೀ ಘನಿತ-ಮದಾಖ್ಯ ಇತಿ ಪಾಲಿತೋ ಭವತಾ.

ಶಿವ ಪಾಹೀತಿ ವದೋಹಂ ಶೃತೋ ನ ಕಿಂ ತ್ವಾಂ ಕಥಂ ನ ಪಾಲ್ಯಸ್ತೇ .. 8..

ಏಂದಶ್ಲೋಕ

Meaning:- I have heard a story that You blessed a dacoit leader because he

was unwittingly repeating Your name "Hara" whenever he said

prahara ಪ್ರಹರ to mean "beat him up, and Ahara ಆಹರ

to mean "kill him". I am wittingly uttering Your name "Shiva" and saying

"save me. Am I not dependant on You? Do I not deserve to be protected by You?

Note:- Even when uttered casually or unwittingly, the Lord's names purify.

They are so powerful. This is said in Shivagita. This says that even if

one utters His name as an exclamation in surprise, or in fear or distress

like hunger, he is purified and gets the highest goal.

ಅಶ್ಚಯೇ ವಾ ಭಯೇ ಶೋಕೇ ಕ್ಷುತೇ ವಾ ಮಮ ನಾಮ ಯಃ .

ವ್ಯಾಜೀನ ವಾ ಸ್ಮರೇದ್ಯಸ್ತು ಸ ಯಾತಿ ಪರಮಾಂ ಗತಿಂ ..

A similar statement is seen in Shri Bhagavatam also.

ಸಾಂಕೇತ್ಯಂ ಪಾರಿಹಾಸ್ಯಂ ವಾ ಸ್ತೋಭಂ ಹೇಲನಮೇವ ವಾ .

ವೈಕುಂಠ-ನಾಮ-ಗ್ರಹಣಂ ಅಶೇಷಾಘಹರಂ ವಿದುಃ ..

Lord's names uttered as a gesture or in joke or in the midst of a song or

even out of disrespect washes away all sins.

ಯಥಾಗದಂ ವೀರ್ಯತಮಮುಪ್ಯುಕ್ತಂ ಯದೃಚ್ಛಯಾ .

ಅಜಾನತೋಽಪ್ಯಾತ್ಮಗುಣಂ ಕುರ್ಯಾನ್ಮಂತ್ರೋಽಪ್ಯುದಹೃತಃ .. BH(6-2-14,19)

Just as a potent medicine will certainly produce its salutary effect even

when taken by one who is unaware of its efficiency, though by chance,

so does the Lord's name reveal its efficacy even when it is uttered by

someone without being aware of its power. DakShayani put this forcefully

to her father DakSha when he insulted Shiva in a sacrifice conducted by him.

He did not invite Shiva and His wife DakShayani. Her father added insult to

the injury by not making any offering to Shiva, her husband. She was greatly outraged by all this and in her reply said the two letters (ಶಿವ) SIVA uttered by one even casually in the course of a conversation will remove the sins quickly.

ಯದ್ ದ್ವಯಕ್ಷರಂ ನಾಮ ಗಿರೇರಿತಂ ನೃಣಾಂ ಸಕೃತ್-ಪ್ರಸಂಗಾದಘಮಾಸು ಹಂತಿ ತತ್ .

ಪವಿತ್ರಕೀರ್ತಿಂ ತಮಲಂಘ್ಯಶಾಸನಂ ಭವಾನಹೋ ದ್ವೇಷ್ಟಿ ಶಿವಂ ಶಿವೇತರಃ .. BH(4-4-14).

ಬೋಗಿನಮದಶ್ಲೋಕಾ

ಶರಣಂ ವ್ರಜ ಶಿವಂ ಆರ್ತಿಂ ಸ ತವ ಹರೇದಿತಿ ಸತಾಂ ಗಿರಾಹಂ ತ್ವಾಂ.

ಶರಣಂ ಗತೋಽಸ್ಮಿ ಪಾಲಯ ಖಲಮಪಿ ತೇಷ್ಟೀಶ ಪಕ್ಷಪಾತಾನ್ಮಾಂ .. 9..

ಏನದಶ್ಲೋಕಾ

Meaning:- I have heard noble people say "surrender to Shiva. He will remove your distress". Having faith in those words I surrender to You. I admit I am a mean person. Will not You save me atleast to make their statement true?

Note:- Surrender to the Lord is the only way for one who wants to walk the new way of life that will free one from sorrows. In particular this is suited to one who does not have great deal of scholarship and had not lead a disciplined life. The poet says this in Sharada bhujanga stotram thus.

ನ ಮಂತ್ರಂ ನ ಯಂತ್ರಂ ನ ವಾ ಸ್ತೋತ್ರರೀತಿಂ ವಿಜಾನೇಽಮ್ಬ ವಕ್ತುಂ ಚ ಮದ್ಬೋಖರೀತಿಂ .

ತ್ವದಂಘ್ರಿಪ್ರಣಮೋ ನ ಪಾತ್ರಂ ಶುಚಃ ಸ್ಯಾದಿತಿ ತ್ವಾಂ ಪ್ರಪದ್ಯೇ ತವೈವ ಪ್ರಸಾದಾತ್ ..

He says "I do not know mantram, tantram, the manner of praising You and not even how to express my distress. One who prostrates at Your feet will not suffer any more. Knowing this I surrender to You by Your grace only."

Krishna says that even if a person had lived an evil life, but had decided to turn a new leaf and worships Him, the Lord considers such a person to be a righteous one and saves him. BG(9-30,31).

ಬೋಗಿನಮದಶ್ಲೋಕಾ

ಅಪಿ ಚೇತ್ಸುದುರಾಚಾರೋ ಭಜತೇ ಮಾಮನನ್ಯಭಾಕ್ .

ಸಾಧುರೇವ ಸ ಮಂತವ್ಯಃ ಸಮ್ಯಗ್ವ್ಯವಸಿತೋ ಹಿ ಸಃ ..

ಕ್ಷಿಪ್ರಂ ಭವತಿ ಧರ್ಮಾತ್ಮಾ ಶಶ್ವಚ್ಛಾಂತಿಂ ನಿಗಚ್ಛತಿ .
ಕೌಂತೇಯ ಪ್ರತಿಜಾನೀಹಿ ನ ಮೇ ಭಕ್ತಃ ಪ್ರಣಶ್ಯತಿ ..

ಏಂದಶ್ಲೋಕ

Krishna assures that one who turns to Him and becomes devoted to Him will not perish. In a similar situation, Shri Vedanta Desika surrenders to the Lord accepting his weaknesses.

ಬೋಗಿನಮದಶ್ಲೋಕ

ಅಜ್ಞಾನವಾರಿಧಿ-ಮಪಾಯಧುರಂಧರಂ ಮಾಂ
ಅಜ್ಞಾವಿಭಂಜನ-ಮಕಿಂಚನಸಾರ್ವಭೌಮಂ .
ವಿಂದನ್ ಭವಾನ್ ವಿಬುಧನಾಥ ಸಮಸ್ತವೇದೀ
ಕಿಂ ನಾಮ ಪಾತ್ರಮಪರಂ ಮನುತೇ ಕೃಪಾಯಾಃ .. Devanayaka Panchashat.(49).

ಏಂದಶ್ಲೋಕ

The poet says “O Lord! You are omniscient. I am an ocean of ignorance. I am the first among sinners. I have broken all Your mandates regarding the Do’s and Dont’s. I have no virtue to claim or take to the path of devotion or surrender. Thus I am the most indigent person. Thus I am the one who needs Your mercy most. Why then are You looking for another person to show Your mercy?” It is seen that in these verses the poet repeatedly says he is a weakling, sinner etc. Obviously such statements do not sound nice. They sound like cringing and whining. Should one keep on making such statements before God who is said to be kind and merciful? All of us do make mistakes. Sometimes such mistakes are made knowingly and often unknowingly also. But no one likes to think of them, not to speak of admitting them before someone else. It is not in one’s nature to confess one’s serious sins to another person. Our ego stands in the way of doing so. In the normal case any person has no means of knowing other person’s mistakes unless he witnesses the act. A criminal has to confess his crimes to a judge when confronted with strong evidences. If he denies the charges or tries to evade them by telling lies etc., he will get into more trouble. On the other hand if he confesses and pleads for mercy explaining he was forced to commit the crime under force of circumstances, the judge may consider his case with sympathy. He may let the offender off with the

minimum penalty. But in our case, many of our sins might have been committed in privacy with no one seeing them. Sins are committed not only by way of bodily actions but by words and thoughts also. The question, then, is why not keep quiet without talking about them? The answer is that we may be able to hide our mistakes from other people, but not from God who sees all and knows all, including our innermost thoughts. Aptly He is known as the Great Witness or sAkShI.

ಸಾಕ್ಷೀ - ಸಾಕ್ಷಾದವ್ಯವಧಾನೇನ ಸ್ವರೂಪಬೋಧೇನ ಈಕ್ಷತೇ ಪಶ್ಯತಿ ಸರ್ವಮಿತಿ ಸಾಕ್ಷೀ . VS(15).

So, there is no question of hiding anything from Him. But, if we are devoted to Him and sincerely repent our past mistakes He may take a lenient view and rid us of the sins that pollute our minds. Krishna tells that just as the blazing fire burns the faggots put into it to ashes quickly, devotion to Him destroys the sins of a devotee. BH(11-14-19).

ಯಥಾಗ್ನಿಃ ಸುಸಮೃದ್ಧಾಚಿಃ ಕರೋತ್ಯೈಧಾಂಸಿ ಭಸ್ಮಸಾತ್ .

ತಥಾ ಮದ್ವಿಷಯಾ ಭಕ್ತಿಃ ಉದ್ಧವೈನಾಂಸಿ ಕೃತ್ಸ್ಮಶಃ ..

Because of this reason God gets the name

ಪಾಪನಾಶನಃ - ಕೀರ್ತಿತಃ ಪೂಜಿತೋ ಧ್ಯಾತಃ ಸ್ಮೃತಃ ಪಾಪರಾಶಿಂ

ನಾಶಯನ್ ಪಾಪನಾಶನಃ . VS(992). Whether by chanting of His names, or worshipped or meditated upon He destroys the heaps of sins of His devotee.

And also

ಪವಿತ್ರಃ - ಪಾವನಃ ಪರಮಸ್ತು ಪುಮಾನ್ ಧ್ಯಾತೋ ದೃಷ್ಟಃ ಕೀರ್ತಿತಃ

ಶ್ರುತಃ ಪೂಜಿತಃ ಸ್ಮೃತಃ ಪ್ರಣತಃ ಸ ಸರ್ವಾನ್ ಪಾಪಾನ್ ಉನ್ನೂಲಯತೀತಿ ..

ಪುಷ್ಕರಮಹಂ ಪವಿತ್ರಮಹ ಮಿತಿ ಶ್ರುತಿಃ .. SS(90).

Fully knowing this, great devotees have repeatedly prayed to Lord to forgive their sins. They say that they have been unable to resist the pull of senses and fallen a prey to petty desires, anger, lust, greed etc., and have committed many mistakes. They have now realised that they cannot win over these powerful enemies with their volition and have come to the Lord as the final recourse. So, it is now incumbent on Him to rescue them who are now full of repentance.

ಇತಿ ಶ್ರೀ ಶ್ರೀಧರವೇಂಕಟೇಶಾರ್ಯಕೃತಿಷು ಆರ್ತಿಹರಸ್ತೋತ್ರಂ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣಂ ..

Artiharastotra

O Lord Shambhu! please cast Your vision that is full of nectar like kindness on me and dispel my suffering. Then only will I understand the truth about Your kind nature. 1

O Lord, I am suffering as the consequence of numerous sins committed by me. But, I am yours now. So, if I am suffering in this manner it does not behoove Your greatness. 2

O Lord, I have heard that those who think of You do not get exposed to suffering. I am crying "Shiva! save me", and still continue to suffer. Is this proper? 3

You are my inner Self. This being so, it is clear that it is by Your inducement only I committed various sins and as the result am now suffering. What can I say in this matter? I deserve to be the recipient of Your grace. 4

I am a dullard, and the foremost one at that. I have not known how to be worthy of Your grace and hence took the wrong path. I am just a wretched person. You should thrust Your grace on me and save me. 5

I confess I am an ignoramus and a weakling. In contrast, You are omniscient and omnipotent. Because of Your omniscience You are aware of my faults. What shall I say? Does not Your compassion prod You to overlook my faults? 6

I depend on You. Still why do You ignore me? Cannot You show some mercy towards me? The saintly people say that You take care of those who depend upon You and remove the distress of those who are destitute and helpless. 7

I have heard a story that You blessed a dacoit leader because he was unwittingly repeating Your name "Hara" whenever he said prahara to mean "beat him up", and Ahara to mean "kill him". I am wittingly uttering Your name "Shiva" and saying "save me". Am I not dependant on You? Do I not deserve to be protected by You? 8
I have heard noble people say "surrender to Shiva. He will remove

your distress["]. Having faith in those words I surrender to You.

I admit I am a mean person. Will not You save me atleast to make their statement true? 9

Thus ends the Artiharastotram composed by Shridhara Venkatesha.

LIFE OF SRIDHARA VENKATESA

ಶ್ರೀಕಂಠಮಿವ ಭಾಸ್ವಂತಂ ಶಿವನಾಮಪರಾಯಣಂ.

ಶ್ರೀಧರಂ ವೇಂಕಟೇಶಾಯಂ ಶ್ರೇಯಸೇ ಗುರುಮಾಶ್ರಯೇ ..


Shridhara Venkatesa lived about 300 years ago in

Tiruvisanallur, a village in Tanjavur district in Tamilnadu. He was called Tiruvisanallur Ayyaval (deeply respected person) out of great respect people held for him. Even today he is known by that name only. He was the son of Lingayaryar who was a minister to the Maharaja of Mysore. Even as a young boy Ayyaval was deeply religious and in particular had great devotion to Shiva but he made no distinction between Shiva and Vishnu. He studied Vedas, shastras and puranas and had a great desire to travel and spread the message of the puranas and in particular the glory of Lord's name among the people. After his father's death the Maharaja wanted him to take his father's job but he politely declined and left Mysore state with his wife and mother. He came to Tiruchirapalli in Tamilnadu and stayed for some time giving talks. He was supposed to have brought back to life a woman who had died by praying to the Lord. This attracted people who wanted him to solve their problems. Ayyaval did not like this and left the place. He proceeded to Tanjavur. It seems that King Shahaji (1684-1710.AD) who was ruling at that time in Tanjavur wanted him to stay in Tanjavur but Ayyaval wanted to lead a quiet life. King Shahaji was inviting scholarly brahmins to stay in his kingdom. He renamed the village Tiruvisanallur as Shahajirajapuram. One street was allotted for their stay. Ayyaval also stayed in a house there. Ayyaval was a proponent of the view that in this dark kali age chanting the lord's name will ward


off its evil effects. He was the senior contemporary of Bodhendra Swami who was the 59th pontiff of the Shankara Math at Kanchipuram and who was an ardent advocate of the glory of the lord's name. Ayyaval wrote a book ಭಗವನ್ನಾಮಭೂಷಣಂ (Bhagavannamabhushanam) on the subject which is sadly not available now. Bodhendra Swami had also written a book ನಾಮಾಮೃತರಸಾಯನಂ (Namamritarasayanam) on the subject wherein he had made references to the work of Ayyaval. Once Ayyaval had to perform a shrAddha ceremony in his house. Therein food is prepared and offered to the departed forefathers who are invoked in three brahmins invited for the occasion. When every thing was getting ready Ayyaval saw an outcaste with his family in a famished condition begging for food. His heart melted with compassion at their condition. Without any hesitation he offered them the food that was being prepared for the ceremony. He then had the house washed and prepared to conduct the ceremony again. But the brahmins in the village considered this act reprehensible and refused to conduct the ceremony again. Ayyaval pleaded with them quoting texts from the scriptures to support his action but the Brahmins were not convinced. He asked them what he should do to remedy the situation. They said that the only atonement was having a bath in the Ganges. But there was no time to go to Varanasi and return. So he prayed to Lord Shiva (in Gangashtakam) to release the waters of Ganga from His matted hair as he did on an earlier occasion for Bhagiratha. Water started flowing out of the well in his house and flooded the streets of the village. The villagers got scared and prayed to Ayyaval to forgive them and stop the flood that was threatening the village. He accordingly prayed again to stop the flooding and requested her to appear in the well every year on that day. Even now people flock to that place every year on that day and take bath in the waters of the well in the belief that Ganga is present in the well on that day. Ayyaval had composed a number of works some of which are not yet been printed and some not available. Some of his works are listed below. (1) Bhagavannama Bhushanam. (2) Akhyashashti. (3) Daya satakam. (4) Matrubhutasatakam. (5)

Stuti paddhati. (6) Shivabhakthikalpalata. (7) Shivabhakta lakshanam. (8)
Taravali stotram. (9) Artihara stotram. (10) Kuliresvarashtakam. (11)
Jambhunathashtakam. (12) Doshapariharashtakam. (13) Krishnadwadasha
manjari. (14) Achyutashtakam. (15) Dola navarathnamala. (16)
Padamanimanjari - a sanskrit dictionary. (17) Shahajiraja charitam.

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Artiharastotram

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