
Kartikeya Skanda Prajnavivardhanam (hymn)

कार्तिकेयस्तोत्रम् प्रज्ञाविवर्धनम्

Document Information

Text title : kArtikeyastotram

File name : skanda.itx

Category : subrahmanya

Location : doc_subrahmanya

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Latest update : December 18, 2004

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September 17, 2023

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Hymn to kArtikeya or skanda

The following stotra on ska.nda is from the rudra yAmala, an important work on tantra . It is a short stotra but also remarkably powerful . The stotra is credited with developing the praGYA (intelligence) and has been given by skanda himself.

praGYAvivardhana (increasing praGYA) mantras are very important in the vedas and other later literature like the tantras . Why is the development of praGYA given such importance? The answer is given in the vedas itself . In the trisuparNa mantra in the mahAnArAyaNa upanishAd, the following mantras occur:

ब्रह्म मेधया ।

Brahman is attained through intelligence

मधु मेधया ।

Bliss is attained through intelligence

ब्रह्ममेव मधु मेधया ।

Brahman, which is verily bliss is attained through intelligence

It should however be noted that the intelligence or medhA which is referred to here is not the mundane intelligence which we refer to in our daily lives . This medhA refers to the development of the buddhi such

that the truth can be clearly

seen . shrI ramaNa maharShI gives an analogy to illustrate how the pure and clear buddhi perceives brahman . Brahman is hidden from the view of the unclear buddhi like dense clouds hiding the sun . The clear buddhi which has been obtained by intense sAdhana, sees brahman like a person seeing the sun through

a thin mist . Thus the jIvanmukta, is different from a person without a clear buddhi.

Hence, development of buddhi is given prime importance in our tradition . The most famous examples is the gAyatri mantra, which is chanted during the daily sandhyAva.ndanam . Another one is the nitya karma for brahmachAris, the samitAdAnam . There are various mantras given in the mahAnArAyaNa upaniShad itself, the mantra invoking indra (yashChandasAm etc) and the medhA sUktam (addressed to sarasvatI and others). There are, of course many more such mantras in the vedas.

However, the recitation of these mantras requires learning them from a guru and many of us are unable to get such an opportunity, especially in this modern age. But, the stotrams from purANAs and the tantras can be chanted by one and all, with no exceptions.

In thamiz tradition, skanda, or murukan as he is called, is considered the very embodiment of all good and it is held that he is eager to bestow GYAnA to one and all . Thus, true to tradition, at the end of the stotram he says that anyone chanting his 28 names, even if he is unable to speak will become accomplished in speech, like Brihaspati . The person who considers this as mahA mantra and chants them will attain mahA praGYA (great intelligence).

Ramakrishnan.

प्रज्ञा विवर्धन कार्तिकेय स्तोत्रं

praGYA vivardhana kArtikeya stotraM

श्रीगणेशाय नमः ।

स्कन्द उवाच ।

योगीश्वरो महासेनः कार्तिकेयोऽग्निनन्दनः ।

स्कन्दः कुमारः सेनानीः स्वामी शङ्करसम्भवः ॥ १ ॥

गाङ्गेयस्ताम्रचूडश्च ब्रह्मचारी शिखिध्वजः ।

तारकारिणुमापुत्रः क्रौञ्चारिश्च षडाननः ॥ २ ॥

शब्दब्रह्मसमुद्रश्च सिद्धः सारस्वतो गुहः ।

सनत्कुमारो भगवान् भोगमोक्षफलप्रदः ॥ ३ ॥

शरजन्मा गणाधीशपूर्वजो मुक्तिमार्गकृत् ।

सर्वागमप्रणेता च वाञ्छितार्थप्रदर्शनः ॥ ४ ॥

अष्टाविंशतिनामानि मदीयानीतियः पठेत् ।

प्रत्यूषं श्रद्धया युक्तो मूको वाचस्पतिर्भवेत् ॥ ५ ॥

महामन्त्रमयानीति मम नामानुकीर्तनम् ।

महाप्रज्ञामवाप्नोति नात्र कार्या विचारणा ॥ ६ ॥

॥ इति श्रीरुद्रयामले प्रज्ञाविवर्धनारख्यं

श्रीमत्कार्तिकेयस्तोत्रं सम्पूर्णम् ॥

The sixteen names are not explained since they are easily understood .

Some of the names refer to some legends associated with skanda.

Skanda said:

The person who reads my 28 names told here with concentration, in the morning, obtains equal status with Brihaspati in speech, even if he cannot speak.

Further, the person who reads my names as maha mantras obtains great intelligence . There is no doubt about this.

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pdf was typeset on September 17, 2023

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