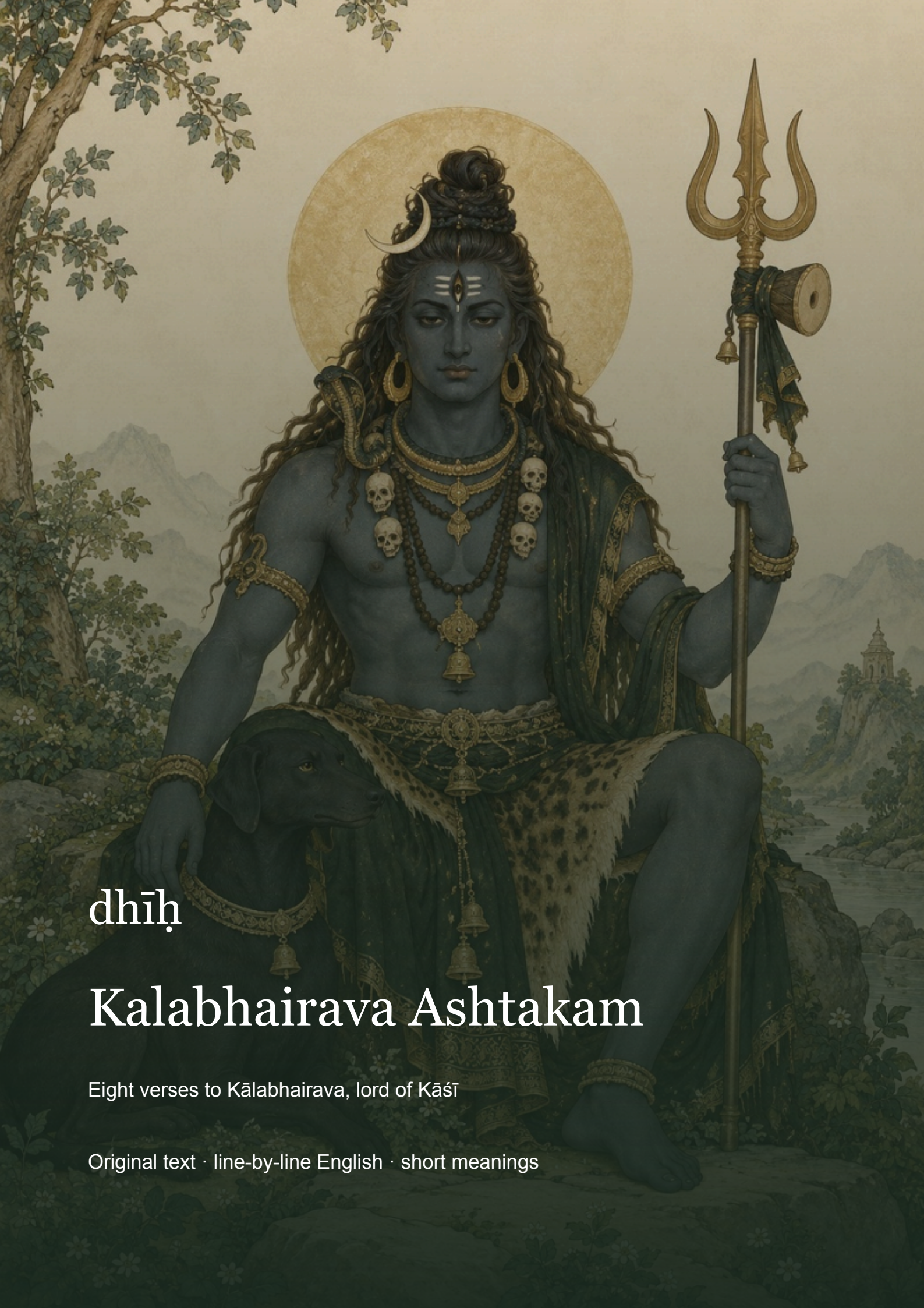


dhīḥ

Kalabhairava Ashtakam

Eight verses to Kālabhairava, lord of Kāśī

Original text · line-by-line English · short meanings

Reading note. The Sanskrit follows the 1910 Sri Vani Vilas edition, volume 18, pages 89–91, with normalized Devanagari spelling and fresh IAST transliteration. Verse 1 retains the printed yajñasūtrabinduśekharaṃ reading. The familiar yajñasūtramindusekharaṃ is a variant recorded in Sanskrit Documents and is not substituted into this historical reading. Other differences from familiar recitations include sthiraṃ and nikvaṇan in verse 4, golden locks (keśapāśa) in verse 5, and bhūṣaṇaṃ in verse 6. Some editions instead describe serpents in verse 5 and use mokṣadaṃ or mokṣaṇaṃ in verse 6. Verse 8 and the closing verse also have small wording differences. The English meanings and reflections were newly written for DHIH. Reflections are contemporary invitations to contemplation, separate from the hymn's literal meaning. This is an editorial reading edition, not a critical edition; specialist Sanskrit review is pending. English meanings are original DHIH editorial prose; see the website for complete source and review notes.

Section 1

देवराजसेव्यमानपावनाङ्घ्रिपङ्कजं

व्यालयज्ञसूत्रबिन्दुशेखरं कृपाकरम् ।

नारदादियोगिवृन्दवन्दितं दिगम्बरं

काशिकापुराधिनाथकालभैरवं भजे ॥

devarājasevyamānapāvanāṅghripaṅkajaṃ
vyālayajñasūtrabinduśekharaṃ kṛpākaram |
nāradādiyogivṛndavanditaṃ digambaraṃ
kāśikāpurādhināthakālabhairavaṃ bhaje ||

SHORT MEANING

I worship Kālabhairava, the presiding lord of Kāśī. His purifying lotus feet are attended by the king of the gods. A serpent is his sacred thread. The printed epithet bindusekhara requires specialist interpretation and is left untranslated here. He is a source of compassion, honoured by Nārada and hosts of yogis, with the directions themselves as his clothing.

Section 2

भानुकोटिभास्वरं भवाब्धितारकं परं

नीलकण्ठमीप्सितार्थदायकं त्रिलोचनम् ।

कालकालमम्बुजाक्षमक्षशूलमक्षरं

काशिकापुराधिनाथकालभैरवं भजे ॥

bhānukoṭibhāsvaraṃ bhavābdhitārakaṃ paraṃ
nīlakaṇṭhamīpsitārthadāyakaṃ trilocanam |
kālakālamambujākṣamakṣaśūlamakṣaraṃ
kāśikāpurādhināthakālabhairavaṃ bhaje ||

SHORT MEANING

I worship Kālabhairava, the presiding lord of Kāśī: supreme, radiant as ten million suns, and a guide across the ocean of worldly existence. Blue-throated and three-eyed, he grants what is sought. He is death even to death, lotus-eyed and imperishable. The epithet akṣaśūla includes the trident, but its complete sense remains unresolved here.

Section 3

शूलटङ्कपाशदण्डपाणिमादिकारणं

श्यामकायमादिदेवमक्षरं निरामयम् ।

भीमविक्रमं प्रभुं विचित्रताण्डवप्रियं

काशिकापुराधिनाथकालभैरवं भजे ॥

śūlaṭaṅkapāśadaṇḍapāṇimādikāraṇaṃ
śyāmakāyamādidevamakṣaraṃ nirāmayam |
bhīmavikramaṃ prabhuṃ vicitratāṇḍavapriyaṃ
kāśikāpurādhināthakālabhairavaṃ bhaje ||

SHORT MEANING

I worship Kālabhairava, the presiding lord of Kāśī. In his hands are a trident, an axe, a noose and a staff. Dark in form, he is the first cause and the primordial deity, imperishable and free of affliction. This mighty lord delights in the wondrous tāṇḍava dance.

Section 4

भुक्तिमुक्तिदायकं प्रशस्तचारुविग्रहं

भक्तवत्सलं स्थिरं समस्तलोकविग्रहम् ।

निक्वणन्मनोज्ञहेमकिङ्किणीलसत्कटिं

काशिकापुराधिनाथकालभैरवं भजे ॥

bhuktimuktidāyakaṃ praśastacāruvigrahaṃ
bhaktavatsalaṃ sthiraṃ samastalokavigraham |
nikvaṇanmanojñahemakiṅkiṇīlasatkaṭiṃ
kāśikāpurādhināthakālabhairavaṃ bhaje ||

SHORT MEANING

I worship Kālabhairava, the presiding lord of Kāśī. He gives both life's enjoyments and liberation, and his beautiful form is praised. Steadfast and tender toward his devotees, he embodies all the worlds. His waist shines with lovely golden bells that ring as he moves.

Section 5

धर्मसेतुपालकं त्वधर्ममार्गनाशकं

कर्मपाशमोचकं सुशर्मदायकं विभुम् ।

स्वर्णवर्णकेशपाशशोभिताङ्गनिर्मलं

काशिकापुराधिनाथकालभैरवं भजे ॥

dharmasetupālakaṃ tvadharmamārganāśakaṃ
karmapāśamocakaṃ suśarmadāyakaṃ vibhum |
svarṇavarṇakeśapāśaśobhitāṅganirmalaṃ
kāśikāpurādhināthakālabhairavaṃ bhaje ||

SHORT MEANING

I worship Kālabhairava, the presiding lord of Kāśī. He guards the sustaining bounds of dharma and brings the course of wrongdoing to an end. The all-pervading lord releases beings from the bonds of action and grants deep well-being. Pure, his form is adorned by golden-coloured locks of hair.

Section 6

रत्नपादुकाप्रभाभिरामपादयुग्मकं

नित्यमद्वितीयमिष्टदैवतं निरञ्जनम् ।

मृत्युदर्पनाशनं करालदंष्ट्रभूषणं

काशिकापुराधिनाथकालभैरवं भजे ॥

ratnapādukāprabhābhirāmapādayugmakaṃ
nityamadvitīyamiṣṭadaivataṃ nirañjanam |
mṛtyudarpanāśanaṃ karāladaṃṣṭrabhūṣaṇaṃ
kāśikāpurādhināthakālabhairavaṃ bhaje ||

SHORT MEANING

I worship Kālabhairava, the presiding lord of Kāśī. His two feet are made lovely by the radiance of jewelled sandals. Eternal, without a second, unstained and beloved as one's chosen deity, he breaks the pride of death. His fearsome fangs themselves are his adornment.

Section 7

अट्टहासभिन्नपद्मजाण्डकोशसन्ततिं

दृष्टिपातनष्टपापजालमुग्रशासनम् ।

अष्टसिद्धिदायकं कपालमालिकाधरं

काशिकापुराधिनाथकालभैरवं भजे ॥

aṭṭahāsabhinnapadmajāṇḍakośasantatiṃ
dṛṣṭipātanaṣṭapāpajālamugraśāsanam |
aṣṭasiddhidāyakaṃ kapālamālikādharaṃ
kāśikāpurādhināthakālabhairavaṃ bhaje ||

SHORT MEANING

I worship Kālabhairava, the presiding lord of Kāśī. His resounding laughter breaks apart the succession of cosmic shells belonging to the lotus-born Brahmā. His glance dissolves the web of wrongdoing, and his rule is formidable. He grants the eight siddhis and wears a garland of skulls.

Section 8

भूतसङ्घनायकं विशालकीर्तिदायकं

काशिवासिलोकपुण्यपापशोधकं विभुम् ।

नीतिमार्गकोविदं पुरातनं जगत्पतिं

काशिकापुराधिनाथकालभैरवं भजे ॥

bhūtasaṅghanāyakaṃ viśālakīrtidāyakaṃ
kāśivāsilokapuṇyapāpaśodhakaṃ vibhum |
nītimārgakovidaṃ purātanaṃ jagatpatiṃ
kāśikāpurādhināthakālabhairavaṃ bhaje ||

SHORT MEANING

I worship Kālabhairava, the presiding lord of Kāśī. He leads the hosts of spirits and bestows far-reaching renown. The all-pervading lord purifies the merits and wrongdoings of those who dwell in Kāśī. He knows the path of right conduct, is ancient, and is the lord of the world.

Section 9

कालभैरवाष्टकं पठन्ति ये मनोहरं

ज्ञानमुक्तिसाधकं विचित्रपुण्यवर्धनम् ।

शोकमोहलोभदैन्यकोपतापनाशनं

ते प्रयान्ति कालभैरवाङ्घ्रिसन्निधिं ध्रुवम् ॥

kālabhairavāṣṭakaṃ paṭhanti ye manoharaṃ
jñānamuktisādhakaṃ vicitrapuṇyavardhanam |
śokamohalobhadainyakopatāpanāśanaṃ
te prayānti kālabhairavāṅghrisannidhiṃ dhruvam ||

SHORT MEANING

Those who recite this beautiful eight-verse hymn to Kālabhairava—described here as a means to knowledge and liberation, an increase of manifold merit, and a dissolver of grief, confusion, greed, distress, anger and anguish—surely reach the presence of Kālabhairava's feet. This is the hymn's traditional statement of the fruits of recitation.

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