



## **ANCIENT STONE TEMPLE OF KASHMIR**

### **Mamleshwar Shiva Temple, Pahalgam, KASHMIR**

The ancient shrine is situated on top of a mountain that lies along the banks of the glacial Kolahoi stream. Mamleshwar Shiva temple is a small temple built by King Jayasimha. Rajatarangini mentions that the king adorned the temple with golden *Kalasha*. The temple is eight feet square internally and faces south-west. It has in front a porch supported on two fluted columns, one of which is missing. The super structure has fallen down. No remnants of the ceiling are left. The walls are straight and vertical above the string course. It contains an old pedestal and a Shiva Linga. There is a stone lined tank in front of the temple which is twelve feet square and is fed by a spring of remarkably pure water which at times rises under the site of the temple in front of stairs. The water of the spring is cold during summer months and hot in winter. The whole place was originally surrounded by rubble stone wall, of which only the foundations are visible on the north side. The temple was externally covered with thick coat of lime plaster.

According to a legend, Lord Shiva reallocated his coronation from Thojwara to Mamleshwar, Lord Ganesha was placed at the entrance-door, safeguarding the door and He did not allow other Davas to enter inside. Due to this reason Mamleshwar temple is also called as "Mam Mal" means "Don't go". The Shiv Linga inside the Mamleshwar Temple or Mamal Temple is made of sand. The spring in the levee of the temple is the same spurt under which Parvati bathed and had asked Lord Ganesha to protect the entrance. Lord Shiva was refused entry by little Ganesha. Lord Shiva in anger beheaded Ganesha. But later at the request of Parvati, Lord Shiva brought Ganesha back to life.

**(Excerpts from the book Kashmir ---Hindu Shrines by Chaman Lal Gadoo)**