

# The Kena Upanishad

## FIRST PART

केनेषितं पतति त्रेषितं मनः केन ज्ञाणः प्रथमः त्रैति युन्नतः ।  
केनेषितां वाचमिमां वदन्ति चक्षुः न्नोत्रं क उ देवो युन्नतः ॥ १ ॥

1. By whom missioned falls the mind shot to its mark? By whom yoked moves the first life-breath forward on its paths? By whom impelled is this word that men speak? What god set eye and ear to their workings?

न्नोत्रस्य न्नोत्रं मनसो मनो यद् वाचो ह वाचं स उ ज्ञाणस्य ज्ञाणः ।  
चक्षुषन्नक्षुरतिमुच्य धीराः त्रेत्यास्मान्नोकादमृता भवन्ति ॥ २ ॥

2. That which is hearing of our hearing, mind of our mind, speech of our speech, that too is life of our life-breath and sight of our sight. The wise are released beyond and they pass from this world and become immortal.

न तत्र चक्षुर्गच्छति न वाग् गच्छति नो मनः ।  
न विन्नो न विजानीमो यथैतदनुशिष्यात् ।  
अन्यदेव तन्नदितादथो अविदितादधि ।  
इति शुन्नम पूर्वेषां ये नस्तद् व्याचक्षिरे ॥ ३ ॥

3. There sight travels not, nor speech, nor the mind. We know It not nor can distinguish how one should teach of It: for It is other than the known; It is there above the unknown. It is so we have heard from men of old who declared That to our understanding.

यन्नाचानभ्युदितं येन वागभ्युन्नते ।  
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विन्नि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ४ ॥

4. That which is unexpressed by the word, that by which the

word is expressed, know That to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here.

यन्मनसा न मनुते येनाहुर्मनो मतम् ।  
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विन्नि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ५ ॥

5. That which thinks not by the mind,<sup>1</sup> that by which the mind is thought, know That to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here.

यच्चक्षुषा न पश्यति येन चक्षुषि पश्यति ।  
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विन्नि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ६ ॥

6. That which sees not with the eye,<sup>2</sup> that by which one sees the eye's seeings, know That to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here.

यच्छ्रोत्रेण न शृणोति येन श्रोत्रमिदं श्रुतम् ।  
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विन्नि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ७ ॥

7. That which hears not with the ear,<sup>3</sup> that by which the ear's hearing is heard, know That to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here.

यत्त्राणेन न ज्ञाणिति येन ज्ञाणः ज्ञणीयते ।  
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विन्नि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ८ ॥

8. That which breathes not with the breath,<sup>4</sup> that by which the life-breath is led forward in its paths, know That to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here.

<sup>1</sup> Or, "that which one thinks not with the mind".

<sup>2</sup> Or, "that which one sees not with the eye".

<sup>3</sup> Or, "that which one hears not with the ear".

<sup>4</sup> Or, "that which one breathes not (i.e. smells not) with the breath".

## SECOND PART

यदि मन्यसे सुवेदेति दभ्रमेवापि नूनं त्वं वेत्थ ब्रह्मणो रूपम् ।  
यदस्य त्वं यदस्य देवेष्वथ नु मीमांस्यमेव ते मन्ये विदितम् ॥ १ ॥

1. If thou thinkest that thou knowest It well, little indeed dost thou know the form of the Brahman. That of It which is thou, that of It which is in the gods, this thou hast to think out. I think It known.

नाहं मन्ये सुवेदेति नो न वेदेति वेद च ।  
यो नस्तन्नद तन्नद नो न वेदेति वेद च ॥ २ ॥

2. I think not that I know It well and yet I know that It is not unknown to me. He of us who knows It, knows That; he knows that It is not unknown to him.

यस्यामतं तस्य मतं मतं यस्य न वेद सः ।  
अविज्ञातं विज्ञानतां विज्ञातमविज्ञानताम् ॥ ३ ॥

3. He by whom It is not thought out, has the thought of It; he by whom It is thought out, knows It not. It is unknown to the discernment of those who discern of It, by those who seek not to discern of It, It is discerned.

न्नतिबोधविदितं मतममृतत्वं हि विन्दते ।  
आत्मना विन्दते वीर्यं विन्नया विन्दतेऽमृतम् ॥ ४ ॥

4. When It is known by perception that reflects It, then one has the thought of It, for one finds immortality; by the self one finds the force to attain and by the knowledge one finds immortality.

इह चेदवेदीदथ सत्यमस्ति न चेदिहावेदीन्महती विनन्निः ।  
भूतेषु भूतेषु विचित्य धीराः न्नेत्यास्मान्नोकादमृता भवन्ति ॥ ५ ॥

5. If here one comes to that knowledge, then one truly is; if here one comes not to the knowledge, then great is the perdition.

The wise distinguish That in all kinds of becomings and they pass forward from this world and become immortal.

### THIRD PART

ब्रह्म ह देवेभ्यो विजिग्ये तस्य ह ब्रह्मणो विजये देवा अमहीयन्त ।  
त ऐक्षन्तास्माकमेवायं विजयोऽस्माकमेवायं महिमेति ॥ १ ॥

1. The Eternal conquered for the gods and in the victory of the Eternal the gods grew to greatness. They saw, "Ours the victory, ours the greatness."

तन्नैषां विजन्नौ तेभ्यो ह न्नादुर्बभूव तन्न व्यजानत किमिदं यक्ष-  
मिति ॥ २ ॥

2. The Eternal knew their thought and appeared before them; and they knew not what was this mighty Daemon.

तेऽग्निमब्रुवञ्जातवेद एतन्निजानीहि किमेतन्नक्षमिति तथेति ॥ ३ ॥

3. They said to Agni, "O thou that knowest all things born, learn of this thing, what may be this mighty Daemon," and he said, "So be it."

तदभ्यङ्गत् तमभ्यवदत् कोऽसीत्यग्निर्वा अहमस्मीत्यब्रवीज्जातवेदा  
वा अहमस्मीति ॥ ४ ॥

4. He rushed towards the Eternal and It said to him, "Who art thou?" "I am Agni," he said, "I am he that knows all things born."

तस्मिंस्त्वयि किं वीर्यमित्यपीदं सर्वं दहेयं यदिदं पृथिव्यामिति ॥ ५ ॥

5. "Since such thou art, what is the force in thee?" "Even all this I could burn, all that is upon the earth."

तस्मै तृणं निदधावेतन्नहेति तदुपन्नेयाय सर्वजवेन तन्न शशाक दग्धुं स  
तत एव निववृते नैतदशकं विन्नातुं यदेतन्नक्षमिति ॥ ६ ॥

6. The Eternal set before him a blade of grass; “This burn;” and he made towards it with all his speed, but could not burn it. There he ceased, and turned back; “I could not know of It, what might be this mighty Daemon.”

अथ वायुमब्रुवन् वायवेतन्निजानीहि किमेतन्नक्षमिति तथेति ॥ ७ ॥

7. Then they said to Vayu, “O Vayu, this discern, what is this mighty Daemon.” He said, “So be it.”

तदभ्यङ्क्षत् तमभ्यवदत् कोऽसीति वायुर्वा अहमस्मीत्यब्रवीन्मातरिन्ना वा अहमस्मीति ॥ ८ ॥

8. He rushed upon That; It said to him, “Who art thou?” “I am Vayu,” he said, “and I am he that expands in the Mother of things.”

तस्मिंस्त्वयि किं वीर्यमित्यपीदं सर्वमाददीय यदिदं पृथिव्यामिति ॥ ९ ॥

9. “Since such thou art, what is the force in thee?” “Even all this I can take for myself, all this that is upon the earth.”

तस्मै तृणं निदधावेतदादत्स्वेति तदुपन्नेयाय सर्वजवेन तन्न शशाकादातुं स तत एव निववृते नैतदशकं विन्नातुं यदेतन्नक्षमिति ॥ १० ॥

10. That set before him a blade of grass; “This take.” He went towards it with all his speed and he could not take it. Even there he ceased, even thence he returned; “I could not discern of That, what is this mighty Daemon.”

अथेन्क्ष्मब्रुवन् मघवन्नेतन्निजानीहि किमेतन्नक्षमिति तथेति तदभ्यङ्क्षत् तस्मान्निरोदधे ॥ ११ ॥

11. Then they said to Indra, “Master of plenitudes, get thou the knowledge, what is this mighty Daemon.” He said, “So be it.” He rushed upon That. That vanished from before him.

स तस्मिन्नेवाकाशे स्त्रियमाजगाम बहुशोभमानामुमां हैमवतीं तां होवाच किमेतन्नक्षमिति ॥ १२ ॥

12. He in the same ether came upon the Woman, even upon Her who shines out in many forms, Uma daughter of the snowy summits. To her he said, “What was this mighty Daemon?”

#### FOURTH PART

सा ब्रूतेति होवाच ब्रह्मणो वा एतन्नजये महीयध्वमिति ततो हैव विदांचकार ब्रूतेति ॥ १ ॥

1. She said to him, “It is the Eternal. Of the Eternal is this victory in which ye shall grow to greatness.” Then alone he came to know that this was the Brahman.

तस्मान्ना एते देवा अतितरामिवान्यान् देवान् यदग्निर्वायुरिन्द्रते न्नेनन्नेदिन्नं पस्पर्शुस्ते न्नेनन्त्रथमो विदांचकार ब्रूतेति ॥ २ ॥

2. Therefore are these gods as it were beyond all the other gods, even Agni and Vayu and Indra, because they came nearest to the touch of That...<sup>5</sup>

तस्मान्ना इन्द्रोऽतितरामिवान्यान्देवान् स न्नेनन्नेदिन्नं पस्पर्श स न्नेनन्त्रथमो विदांचकार ब्रूतेति ॥ ३ ॥

3. Therefore is Indra as it were beyond all the other gods because he came nearest to the touch of That, because he first knew that it was the Brahman.

तस्यैष आदेशो यदेतन्नित्तुतो व्यन्नुतदाइ इतीन्त्यमीमिषदाइ इत्यधि-  
दैवतम् ॥ ४ ॥

4. Now this is the indication of That, — as is this flash of the lightning upon us or as is this falling of the eyelid, so in that which is of the gods.

<sup>5</sup> By some mistake of early memorisers or later copyists the rest of the verse has become hopelessly corrupted. It runs, “They he first came to know that it was the Brahman,” which is neither fact nor sense nor grammar. The close of the third verse has crept into and replaced the original close of the second.

अथाध्यात्मं यदेतन्नच्छतीव च मनोऽनेन चैतदुपस्मरत्यभीक्षणं सं-  
कल्पः ॥ ५ ॥

5. Then in that which is of the Self, — as the motion of this mind seems to attain to That and by it afterwards the will in the thought continually remembers It.

तन्न तन्नं नाम तन्नमित्युपासितव्यं स य एतदेवं वेदाभि ह्येनं सर्वाणि  
भूतानि संवाञ्छन्ति ॥ ६ ॥

6. The name of That is “That Delight”; as That Delight one should follow after It. He who so knows That, towards him verily all existences yearn.

उपनिषदं भो ब्रूहीत्युन्नता त उपनिषद् ब्राह्मी वाव त उपनिषदमब्रू-  
मेति ॥ ७ ॥

7. Thou hast said “Speak to me Upanishad”;<sup>6</sup> spoken to thee is Upanishad. Of the Eternal verily is the Upanishad that we have spoken.

तस्यै तपो दमः कर्मेति न्नतिन्ना वेदाः सर्वान्नानि सत्यमायतनम् ॥ ८ ॥

8. Of this knowledge austerity and self-conquest and works are the foundation, the Vedas are all its limbs, truth is its dwelling place.

यो वा एतामेवं वेदापहृत्य पाप्मानमनन्ते स्वर्गे लोके ज्येये न्नतित्तिन्नति  
न्नतित्तिन्नति ॥ ९ ॥

9. He who knows this knowledge, smites evil away from him and in that vaster world and infinite heaven finds his foundation, yea, he finds his foundation.

<sup>6</sup> Upanishad means inner knowledge, that which enters into the final Truth and settles in it.