



Kaushitaki Upanishad

UNKNOWN

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Translated by Michael Berardi

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TRANSLATOR

Michael Berardi

THE WORK

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Adhyaya 1



Om. May my speech be grounded in my mind. May my mind be grounded in my speech. Be manifest to me, be manifest. Be the two anchors of the Veda for me. May what I have heard never leave me.

Through this study I join day and night. I will speak what is right. I will speak what is true. May that protect me. May that protect the speaker. Protect me; protect the speaker.

Om. Peace, peace, peace.

- ¹ Chitra Gargyayani, intending to offer a sacrifice, chose Aruni as his priest. Aruni sent his son Shvetaketu, saying, “Perform the sacrifice for him.” When Shvetaketu was seated, Chitra asked him, “Son of Gautama, is there a hidden place in the world where you will establish me, or some other? Will you establish me in its world with knowledge of it?” He answered, “I do not know this. Let me ask my teacher.” He went to his father and asked, “This is what he asked me. How should I answer?” His father said, “I do not know this either. We study our sacred recitation in the sacrificial hall and take what others give us. Come, we will both go.” With firewood in his hand, he approached Chitra Gargyayani, saying, “Let me come to you as a pupil.” Chitra told him, “You are worthy of Brahman, Gautama, for you have come to me. Come, I will give you understanding.”

- ² He said, “All who depart from this world go to the moon. Through their breaths its waxing half is filled. In its waning half, however, it does not bring them to birth. The moon is the gate of the heavenly world. Whoever answers it, it lets pass; but whoever answers it, it rains him down here as rain. Here he is born again as a worm, a moth, a bird, a tiger, a lion, a fish, a snake, a human being, or in some other of these stations, according to his deeds and according to his knowledge.” When he arrives, the moon asks him, “Who are you?” He should answer it: “O seasons, the seed was brought from the discerning one, the fifteenfold, brought forth, endowed with the fathers. Send me, that seed, into a man who will beget me. Through the man who begot me, I was poured into a mother. Being born, coming into birth, I became the twelve- or thirteen-month year, through the father of twelve or thirteen months. I know this. O mortal seasons, take hold of me as that. Through this truth, through this ardor, I am the season; I am born of the seasons.” “Who are you?” “I am you.” It lets him pass.
- ³ Having reached this path of the gods, he comes to the world of Agni, then to the world of Vayu, to the world of Varuna, to the world of Aditya, to the world of Indra, to the world of Prajapati, and to the world of Brahman. In this world of Brahman are the lake Ara, the moment Anveshtiha, the river Viraja, the tree Ilya, the assembly place Salajya, the dwelling Aparajita, and Indra and Prajapati as gatekeepers; the hall Vibhupramita, the throne Vichakshana, and the couch Amitaujas; Priya, of the mind, and Prtirupa, of the eye, weaving flowers and the worlds; the apsaras Amba and Ambayavis, and the rivers Ambaya. One who knows this arrives there. Brahman says, “Run to meet him with my glory! He has reached the river Vijara. He will not grow old.”
- ⁴ Five hundred apsaras run to meet him: a hundred with powders in their hands, a hundred with fruit in their hands, a hundred with eye ointment in their hands, and a hundred with garlands in their hands. They adorn him with Brahman’s adornment. Adorned with Brahman’s adornment, knowing Brahman, he goes toward Brahman itself. He comes to the lake Ara and crosses it with his mind; those who know only the present sink when they enter it. He

comes to the moments called Yeshtihas, and they flee from him. He comes to the river Viraja and crosses it with his mind alone. There he shakes off his good deeds and his bad. His dear relatives receive his good deeds; those he does not hold dear receive his bad. As one riding swiftly in a chariot looks upon its two wheels, so he looks upon day and night; so he looks upon good deeds and bad, and all pairs of opposites. Free of good deeds, free of bad deeds, knowing Brahman, he goes toward Brahman itself.

5 He comes to the tree Ilya, and the fragrance of Brahman enters him. He comes to the assembly place Salajya, and the savor of Brahman enters him. He comes to the dwelling Aparajita, and the radiance of Brahman enters him. He comes to the gatekeepers, Indra and Prajapati, and they flee from him. He comes to the hall Vibhupramita, and the glory of Brahman enters him. He comes to the throne Vichakshana. Its two front legs are the Saman chants Brihat and Rathantara; its two rear legs are Shyaita and Naudhasa. Vairupa and Vairaja are its lengthwise beams; Shakvara and Raivata are its crossbeams. It is awareness, for through awareness one sees clearly. He comes to the couch Amitaujas. It is breath. Its two front legs are the past and the future; its two rear legs are Shri and Ira. Brihat and Rathantara are its lengthwise beams; Bhadra and Yajnayajniya are its headpiece. The Rig verses and Saman chants are its lengthwise threads; the Yajus formulas are its crosswise threads. The Soma stalks are its bedding; the Udgitha is its headrest; Shri is its pillow. Upon it Brahman sits. He who knows this mounts it first with his foot. Brahman asks him, “Who are you?” He should answer:

6 “I am the season; I am born of the seasons. I have come into being from space as a womb, the consort of this year whose being is radiance, whose being is existence, whose being is the Self. You are the Self. What you are, I am.” Brahman asks him, “Who am I?” He should say, “Truth.” “What is this truth?” “Whatever is other than the gods and the breaths is sat; the gods and the breaths are tyam. Through this utterance it is voiced as satyam, truth. This is the full extent of all that is. You are all this.” This is what he tells him. This has been expressed in a Rig verse: “His belly is Yajus, his head is Saman; that unfading one’s form is

Rig. He is to be known as Brahman, the great seer whose substance is Brahman.” Brahman asks him, “By what do you attain my masculine names?” He should say, “By breath.” “By what my feminine names?” “By speech.” “By what my neuter names?” “By mind.” “By what do you perceive scents?” He should say, “By the sense of smell.” “By what forms?” “By the eye.” “By what sounds?” “By the ear.” “By what the tastes of food?” “By the tongue.” “By what do you perform deeds?” “By the hands.” “By what do you experience pleasure and pain?” “By the body.” “By what joy, sexual delight, and Prajapati?” “By the organ of generation.” “By what do you make your journeys?” “By the feet.” “By what do you apprehend thoughts, what is to be known, and desires?” He should say, “By awareness.” Brahman tells him, “The waters, indeed, are that world of mine; this world is yours.” Whatever victory belongs to Brahman, whatever attainment, he wins that victory and reaches that attainment—whoever knows this, whoever knows this.

Adhyaya 2



- ¹ “Breath is Brahman,” Kaushitaki used to say. Of this breath, this Brahman, mind is the messenger, speech the attendant, sight the body, and hearing the herald. All these deities bring tribute to breath, to Brahman, though it asks for nothing. In the same way, all beings bring tribute, unasked, to one who knows this. Its secret teaching is: do not beg. If someone has begged in a village and received nothing, let him sit down, thinking, “I will not eat anything given from here.” The very people who first turned him away then invite him: “Let us give to you.” This is the rule for one who begs. Yet from elsewhere, too, people invite him: “Let us give to you.”
- ² “Breath is Brahman,” Paingya used to say. Speech encloses sight beyond itself; sight encloses hearing beyond itself; hearing encloses mind beyond itself; mind encloses breath beyond itself. All these deities bring tribute to this breath, this Brahman, though it asks for nothing. In the same way, all beings bring tribute, unasked, to one who knows this. Its secret teaching is: do not beg. If someone has begged in a village and received nothing, let him sit down, thinking, “I will not eat anything given from here.” The very people who first turned him away then invite him: “Let us give to you.” This is the rule for one who is asked. Yet from elsewhere, too, people invite him: “Let us give to you.”

- ³ Now, the securing of a particular possession. If someone desires a particular possession, on the full moon or the new moon, or during the bright fortnight under an auspicious star, let him kindle a fire, sweep around it, spread sacred grass, sprinkle water around it, and bend his right knee forward. With a sacrificial ladle, a cup, or a metal bowl, let him offer these oblations of clarified butter: “Speech is the deity that secures. May it secure this for me from that person. To it, svaha! Breath is the deity that secures. May it secure this for me from that person. To it, svaha! Sight is the deity that secures. May it secure this for me from that person. To it, svaha! Hearing is the deity that secures. May it secure this for me from that person. To it, svaha! Mind is the deity that secures. May it secure this for me from that person. To it, svaha! Awareness is the deity that secures. May it secure this for me from that person. To it, svaha!” Then, after smelling the smoke and rubbing his limbs with the butter that remains, let him go in silence and state his purpose, or send a messenger. He obtains it.
- ⁴ Now, the divine rite of remembrance. If someone wishes to be dear to a man or a woman, let him kindle a fire at one of those same turning points of the moon and, following the same procedure, offer these oblations of clarified butter: “I offer speech into myself, O named one. Svaha! I offer your sight into myself, O named one. Svaha! I offer your hearing into myself, O named one. Svaha! I offer your mind into myself, O named one. Svaha! I offer your awareness into myself, O named one. Svaha!” Then, after smelling the smoke and rubbing his limbs with the butter that remains, let him go in silence and seek bodily contact, or stand speaking where the wind blows toward that person. He becomes dear to them; they remember him.
- ⁵ Now, the evening food-offering, also called Pratardana’s inner fire-offering. While a person speaks, he cannot breathe: then he offers breath into speech. While a person breathes, he cannot speak: then he offers speech into breath. These are two endless, immortal offerings. Waking and sleeping, he offers them continually, without a break. Other offerings have an end, for they consist of acts. Knowing this, the ancient sages did not perform the fire-offering.

- ⁶ “The recitation is Brahman,” Shushkabhringara used to say. Let one meditate on it as a Rigvedic verse: all beings honor him as foremost. Let one meditate on it as a sacrificial formula: all beings join themselves to him as foremost. Let one meditate on it as a chant: all beings bow before him as foremost. Let one meditate on it as splendor; let one meditate on it as renown; let one meditate on it as radiance. Just as this is the most splendid, renowned, and radiant of recitations, so one who knows this becomes the most splendid, renowned, and radiant of all beings. The Adhvaryu priest prepares this self, made of bricks and ritual acts. Into it he weaves what is made of sacrificial formulas; into that fabric of formulas, the Hotri priest weaves what is made of verses; into that fabric of verses, the Udgatri priest weaves what is made of chants. This is the self of the whole threefold Vedic knowledge, and this is his own self. One who knows this comes to have this as his self.
- ⁷ Now, the three devotions of Sarvajit Kaushitaki. Having put on his sacred thread and sipped water, let one pour water three times from a vessel and worship the rising sun: “You are the remover; remove my evil.” By the same procedure, let him worship it at midday: “You are the remover on high; remove my evil.” By the same procedure, let him worship it as it sets: “You are the gatherer; gather away my evil.” Whatever evil he commits by day and night, he wipes away.
- ⁸ Then, month by month at the new moon, let him worship the moon when it appears in the west, following the same procedure and addressing it with two green blades of grass: “Your heart, so fair of outline, rests within the moon. Through it, O lord of immortality, may I never weep over a grandson’s misfortune.” His offspring do not depart before him. This is for one who has a son. One who has no son recites these three verses: “Grow full; let it unite with you”; “Let your milk unite, let nourishment come together”; “The stalk that the Adityas cause to swell.” Then: “Do not grow full through our breath, our offspring, or our cattle. Grow full through the breath, offspring, and cattle of one who hates us and whom we hate.” Saying, “I turn with the divine turning; I follow the turning of the sun,” he turns his right arm with it.

- ⁹ Then, at the full moon, let him worship the moon when it appears in the east, following the same procedure: “You are King Soma, the far-seeing. You are Prajapati, with five mouths. The brahmin is one of your mouths; with that mouth you eat kings. With that mouth make me an eater of food. The king is one of your mouths; with that mouth you eat the common people. With that mouth make me an eater of food. The falcon is one of your mouths; with that mouth you eat birds. With that mouth make me an eater of food. Fire is one of your mouths; with that mouth you eat this world. With that mouth make me an eater of food. In you is the fifth mouth; with that mouth you eat all beings. With that mouth make me an eater of food. Do not wane through our breath, our offspring, or our cattle. Wane through the breath, offspring, and cattle of one who hates us and whom we hate.” Saying, “I turn with the divine turning; they follow the turning of the sun,” he turns his right arm with it.
- ¹⁰ Then, as he lies down, let him touch his wife’s heart: “What is placed within your fair-bordered heart, within Prajapati—I believe I know it. Through it, may I never weep over a grandson’s misfortune.” His offspring do not depart before him.
- ¹¹ Then, when setting out on a journey, let him touch his son’s head: “From limb to limb you come into being; from the heart you are born. You are my Self, my son; you have protected me. Live a hundred autumns, O named one.” Here he speaks the boy’s name. “Be a stone; be an axe; be gold unconquered. Radiance is what you are called, my son. Live a hundred autumns, O named one.” Here he speaks his name. “With that which Prajapati used to embrace his creatures for their safety, I embrace you, O named one.” Here he speaks his name. Then he whispers into the boy’s right ear, “Grant to him, generous lord, drinker of the pressed juice,” and into the left, “Indra, bestow the finest treasures.” “Do not be cut off; do not come to harm. Live a hundred autumns of life, my son. With your name I smell your head, O named one.” Let him smell his head three times. Saying, “With the lowing of cows I low over you,” let him low over the boy’s head three times.

- ¹² Now, the dying of the deities around one. This Brahman shines when fire blazes; it dies when fire no longer blazes. Its radiance goes into the sun, its breath into the wind. This Brahman shines when the sun is seen; it dies when the sun is no longer seen. Its radiance goes into the moon, its breath into the wind. This Brahman shines when the moon is seen; it dies when the moon is no longer seen. Its radiance goes into lightning, its breath into the wind. This Brahman shines when lightning flashes; it dies when lightning no longer flashes. Its radiance goes into the wind, its breath into the wind. All these deities enter the wind. Though dead within the wind, they do not perish: from it they rise again. So much for the deities; now for the self.
- ¹³ This Brahman shines when one speaks with speech; it dies when one no longer speaks. Its radiance goes into sight, its breath into breath. This Brahman shines when one sees with sight; it dies when one no longer sees. Its radiance goes into hearing, its breath into breath. This Brahman shines when one hears with hearing; it dies when one no longer hears. Its radiance goes into mind, its breath into breath. This Brahman shines when one thinks with mind; it dies when one no longer thinks. Its radiance goes into breath, its breath into breath. All these deities enter breath. Though dead within breath, they do not perish: from it they rise again. If the two mountains, the southern and the northern, should roll toward one who knows this, seeking to crush him, they would not lay him low. But those who hate him, and those whom he himself hates, all die around him.
- ¹⁴ Now, the attainment of what is highest. All the deities, disputing among themselves, "I am the best," left this body. It lay like a piece of wood. Speech entered it; speaking with speech, it still lay there. Sight entered it; speaking with speech and seeing with sight, it still lay there. Hearing entered it; speaking with speech, seeing with sight, and hearing with hearing, it still lay there. Mind entered it; speaking with speech, seeing with sight, hearing with hearing, and thinking with mind, it still lay there. Then breath entered it, and at once it rose. Recognizing that the highest good lay in breath, the deities joined themselves to breath, the self of awareness, and together with all these left this world. With

wind as their foundation and space as their self, they went to heaven. In the same way, one who knows this joins himself to breath, the self of awareness of all beings, and together with all these leaves this body. With wind as his foundation and space as his self, he does not go to heaven: he becomes that in which those deities are. Attaining it, he becomes immortal, as the deities are immortal.

- ¹⁵ Now, what they call the handing on from father to son. A father about to depart summons his son. Having spread fresh grass through the room, kindled a fire, and set out a pot of water with a bowl, he lies down, wrapped in an unworn cloth. The son comes and lies upon him, touching his father's sense organs with his own; or he may sit facing him. Then the father hands on what is his.

"I place my speech in you," says the father. "I place your speech in myself," says the son.

"I place my breath in you," says the father. "I place your breath in myself," says the son.

"I place my sight in you," says the father. "I place your sight in myself," says the son.

"I place my hearing in you," says the father. "I place your hearing in myself," says the son.

"I place my mind in you," says the father. "I place your mind in myself," says the son.

"I place my tastes of food in you," says the father. "I place your tastes of food in myself," says the son.

"I place my deeds in you," says the father. "I place your deeds in myself," says the son.

"I place my pleasure and pain in you," says the father. "I place your pleasure and pain in myself," says the son.

"I place my joy, delight, and power of generation in you," says the father. "I place your joy, delight, and power of generation in myself," says the son.

"I place my movements in you," says the father. "I place your movements in myself," says the son.

“I place my thoughts, what is to be known, and my desires in you,” says the father. “I place your thoughts, what is to be known, and your desires in myself,” says the son.

Then the son turns to the right and goes out toward the northeast. His father calls after him: “May renown, the radiance of sacred knowledge, the eating of food, and fame favor you.” The son looks back over his left shoulder, shielding himself with his hand or covering himself with the edge of his garment: “May you attain the heavenly worlds and your desires.” If the father recovers, he should live under his son’s authority or go forth as a wanderer. If he dies, the rites that bring him to his end must be completed for him in that very manner; they must be completed in that very manner.

Adhyaya 3



- ¹ Through battle and manly courage, Pratardana, son of Divodasa, reached Indra's beloved dwelling. Indra said to him, "Pratardana, let me give you a boon." Pratardana answered, "Choose for me yourself what you judge most beneficial to a human being." Indra said, "A boon is not chosen for another. Choose it yourself." "Then I have no boon," Pratardana replied. Yet Indra did not depart from truth, for Indra is truth. He said, "Know me alone. This is what I judge most beneficial to a human being: that he should know me. I slew Tvashtar's three-headed son. I gave the Yatis, head downward, to the wolves. Breaking many compacts, I crushed the descendants of Prahlada in heaven, the descendants of Puloma in the middle air, and the Kalakhanjas on earth. Yet not a hair of mine was harmed there. For one who knows me, no deed diminishes his world—not the killing of a mother, not the killing of a father, not theft, not the killing of an unborn child. Even if he has done evil, no dark stain is seen in his face."
- ² He said, "I am breath, the Self of awareness. Meditate on me as life, as immortality. Life is breath; breath is life; breath itself is immortality. As long as breath dwells in this body, there is life. Through breath one reaches immortality in that other world; through awareness, the fulfillment of one's resolve. One who meditates on me as life and immortality reaches the full span of life in this world and attains immortality, unfailing life in the heavenly world. Some say

that the powers of life become one. For no one could at one moment make known a name through speech, a form through sight, a sound through hearing, and a thought through mind. The powers of life are one: each makes all these known. When speech speaks, all the powers of life speak with it. When sight sees, all the powers of life see with it. When hearing hears, all the powers of life hear with it. When mind thinks, all the powers of life think with it. When breath breathes, all the powers of life breathe with it.” Indra said, “That is indeed so. Yet among the powers of life there is an attainment of what is highest.”

- 3 “A person lives when speech is gone, for we see people who cannot speak. A person lives when sight is gone, for we see the blind. A person lives when hearing is gone, for we see the deaf. A person lives without a mature mind, for we see infants. A person lives with an arm cut off; a person lives with a thigh cut off. This is what we see. But it is breath, the Self of awareness, that takes hold of this body and raises it up. Therefore one should meditate on this alone. What is breath is awareness; what is awareness is breath. Together they dwell in this body; together they depart. This is the vision of it, the understanding of it: when a person sleeps and sees no dream, he becomes one in this breath. Then speech enters him with all names; sight enters him with all forms; hearing enters him with all sounds; mind enters him with all thoughts. When he wakes, just as sparks from a blazing fire scatter in every direction, so the powers of life scatter from this Self, each to its own dwelling; from the powers of life come the deities, and from the deities the worlds. This is the proof of it, the understanding of it: when a person is ill and near death, not sinking into weakness or entering delusion, people say, ‘His thought has departed. He does not hear; he does not see; he speaks, but he does not think.’ Then he becomes one in this breath. Speech enters him with all names; sight enters him with all forms; hearing enters him with all sounds; mind enters him with all thoughts. When he wakes, just as sparks scatter from a blazing fire, so the powers of life scatter from this Self, each to its own dwelling; from the powers of life come the deities, and from the deities the worlds.”

- ⁴ “When he leaves this body, he leaves together with all these. Speech releases from him all names, sends them forth; through speech he reaches all names. Breath releases from him all smells; through breath he reaches all smells. Sight releases from him all forms; through sight he reaches all forms. Hearing releases from him all sounds; through hearing he reaches all sounds. Mind releases from him all thoughts; through mind he reaches all thoughts. This is the attainment of all things in breath. What is breath is awareness; what is awareness is breath. Together they dwell in this body; together they depart. Now we will explain how all beings become one for this awareness.
- ⁵ “Speech is one outstretched limb of awareness; facing it outside is name, its corresponding element of being. Smell is one outstretched limb of awareness; facing it outside is odor, its corresponding element of being. Sight is one outstretched limb of awareness; facing it outside is form, its corresponding element of being. Hearing is one outstretched limb of awareness; facing it outside is sound, its corresponding element of being. The tongue is one outstretched limb of awareness; facing it outside is the taste of food, its corresponding element of being. The hands are one outstretched limb of awareness; facing them outside is action, their corresponding element of being. The body is one outstretched limb of awareness; facing it outside are pleasure and pain, its corresponding element of being. The organ of generation is one outstretched limb of awareness; facing it outside are joy, delight, and procreation, its corresponding element of being. The feet are one outstretched limb of awareness; facing them outside is movement, their corresponding element of being. Awareness itself is one outstretched limb; facing it outside are thoughts, what is to be known, and desires, its corresponding element of being.
- ⁶ “Through awareness one mounts speech, and through speech reaches all chants. Through awareness one mounts breath, and through breath reaches all smells. Through awareness one mounts sight, and through sight reaches all forms. Through awareness one mounts hearing, and through hearing reaches all sounds. Through awareness one mounts the tongue, and through the tongue reaches all tastes of food. Through awareness one mounts the hands,

and through the hands reaches all actions. Through awareness one mounts the body, and through the body reaches pleasure and pain. Through awareness one mounts the organ of generation, and through that organ reaches joy, delight, and awareness. Through awareness one mounts the feet, and through the feet reaches all movements. Through awareness alone one mounts understanding, and through awareness alone reaches thoughts, what is to be known, and desires.

7 “Without awareness, speech could make no name known. One says, ‘My mind was elsewhere; I did not recognize that name.’ Without awareness, breath could make no smell known. One says, ‘My mind was elsewhere; I did not recognize that smell.’ Without awareness, sight could make no form known. One says, ‘My mind was elsewhere; I did not recognize that form.’ Without awareness, hearing could make no sound known. One says, ‘My mind was elsewhere; I did not recognize that sound.’ Without awareness, the tongue could make no taste of food known. One says, ‘My mind was elsewhere; I did not recognize that taste of food.’ Without awareness, the hands could make no action known. One says, ‘My mind was elsewhere; I did not recognize that action.’ Without awareness, the body could make no pleasure or pain known. One says, ‘My mind was elsewhere; I did not recognize that pleasure or pain.’ Without awareness, the organ of generation could make no joy, delight, or procreation known. One says, ‘My mind was elsewhere; I did not recognize that joy, delight, or procreation.’ Without awareness, the feet could make no movement known. One says, ‘My mind was elsewhere; I did not recognize that movement.’ Without awareness, no thought could be accomplished and nothing to be known could be known.

8 “Do not seek to know speech; know the speaker. Do not seek to know smell; know the one who smells. Do not seek to know form; know the one who knows form. Do not seek to know sound; know the hearer. Do not seek to know the taste of food; know the one who knows the taste of food. Do not seek to know action; know the doer. Do not seek to know pleasure and pain; know the one who knows pleasure and pain. Do not seek to know joy, delight, or pro-

creation; know the one who knows joy, delight, and procreation. Do not seek to know movement; know the one who moves. Do not seek to know mind; know the thinker. These ten elements of being rest upon awareness, and the ten elements of awareness rest upon being. If there were no elements of being, there would be no elements of awareness; if there were no elements of awareness, there would be no elements of being.

- 9 “From either side alone, no form could be established. Nor are these separate. As the rim of a chariot wheel rests upon its spokes and the spokes rest upon the hub, so these elements of being rest upon the elements of awareness, and the elements of awareness rest upon breath. This breath is the Self of awareness: blissful, ageless, immortal. It does not become greater through a good deed, nor smaller through an evil deed. It makes the person whom it wishes to raise from these worlds perform a good deed; it makes the person whom it wishes to lead downward perform an evil deed. It is the guardian of the world, the ruler of the world, the lord of all. Know: ‘It is my Self.’ Know: ‘It is my Self.’”

Adhyaya 4



- ¹ Balaki Gargya was a learned and widely known man. He had lived among the Ushinaras, the Matsyas, the Kurus and Panchalas, and the people of Kashi and Videha. He came to Ajatashatru, king of Kashi, and said, “Let me tell you of Brahman.” Ajatashatru answered, “For those words, we give you a thousand. People run about saying, ‘Janaka! Janaka!’”
- ² Balaki said, “It is the person in the sun that I meditate on.” Ajatashatru answered, “Do not speak to me of that. I meditate on him as the great one, clothed in white, standing above all, the head of all beings. One who meditates on him in this way stands above all and becomes the head of all beings.”
- ³ Balaki said, “It is the person in the moon that I meditate on.” Ajatashatru answered, “Do not speak to me of that. I meditate on him as King Soma, the self of food. One who meditates on him in this way becomes the self of food.”
- ⁴ Balaki said, “It is the person in lightning that I meditate on.” Ajatashatru answered, “Do not speak to me of that. I meditate on him as the self of radiance. One who meditates on him in this way becomes the self of radiance.”
- ⁵ Balaki said, “It is the person in thunder that I meditate on.” Ajatashatru answered, “Do not speak to me of that. I meditate on him as the self of sound. One who meditates on him in this way becomes the self of sound.”

- ⁶ Balaki said, “It is the person in space that I meditate on.” Ajatashatru answered, “Do not speak to me of that. I meditate on him as Brahman, full and unmoving. One who meditates on him in this way is filled with offspring and cattle. Neither he nor his offspring depart before their time.”
- ⁷ Balaki said, “It is the person in the wind that I meditate on.” Ajatashatru answered, “Do not speak to me of that. I meditate on him as Indra Vaikuntha, the unconquered host. One who meditates on him in this way is victorious, never vanquished, and conquers others.”
- ⁸ Balaki said, “It is the person in fire that I meditate on.” Ajatashatru answered, “Do not speak to me of that. I meditate on him as the overcomer. One who meditates on him in this way becomes an overcomer.”
- ⁹ Balaki said, “It is the person in the waters that I meditate on.” Ajatashatru answered, “Do not speak to me of that. I meditate on him as the Self in its name. One who meditates on him in this way becomes the Self in its name.” So much for the deities; now for the self.
- ¹⁰ Balaki said, “It is the person in the mirror that I meditate on.” Ajatashatru answered, “Do not speak to me of that. I meditate on him as the counterpart. One who meditates on him in this way has a child born in his likeness, not one unlike him.”
- ¹¹ Balaki said, “It is the person in the echo that I meditate on.” Ajatashatru answered, “Do not speak to me of that. I meditate on him as the companion who never leaves. One who meditates on him in this way gains from a companion and has a companion.”
- ¹² Balaki said, “It is the sound that follows a person that I meditate on.” Ajatashatru answered, “Do not speak to me of that. I meditate on it as the life-breath. One who meditates on it in this way—neither he nor his offspring lose consciousness before their time.”

- 13 Balaki said, "It is the person in the shadow that I meditate on." Ajatashatru answered, "Do not speak to me of that. I meditate on him as death. One who meditates on him in this way—neither he nor his offspring die before their time."
- 14 Balaki said, "It is the person within the body that I meditate on." Ajatashatru answered, "Do not speak to me of that. I meditate on him as Prajapati. One who meditates on him in this way brings forth offspring and cattle."
- 15 Balaki said, "It is the aware Self, through which a sleeping person moves in dreams, that I meditate on." Ajatashatru answered, "Do not speak to me of that. I meditate on him as King Yama. For one who meditates on him in this way, all this comes together to establish his preeminence."
- 16 Balaki said, "It is the person in the right eye that I meditate on." Ajatashatru answered, "Do not speak to me of that. I meditate on him as the self of name, the self of fire, and the self of light. One who meditates on him in this way becomes the self of all these."
- 17 Balaki said, "It is the person in the left eye that I meditate on." Ajatashatru answered, "Do not speak to me of that. I meditate on him as the self of truth, the self of lightning, and the self of radiance. One who meditates on him in this way becomes the self of all these."
- 18 Then Balaki fell silent. Ajatashatru asked him, "Is that all, Balaki?" "That is all," Balaki answered. Ajatashatru said, "You spoke falsely to me, then, when you said, 'Let me tell you of Brahman.' Balaki, it is the maker of these persons, the one whose work all this is, that must be known." Then Balaki came to him with fuel in his hands, saying, "Let me approach you as a pupil." Ajatashatru answered, "It would be against the accustomed order for a warrior to initiate a brahmin. Come; I will nevertheless make it known to you." Taking him by the hand, he went out. They came to a sleeping man. Ajatashatru called to him: "Great one! Clothed in white! King Soma!" But the man lay there in silence.

Then he prodded him with a staff, and the man rose at once. Ajatashatru asked Balaki, “Where was this person lying, Balaki? Where had he been? From where has he come?” Balaki did not know.

¹⁹ Ajatashatru said to him, “Balaki, as for where this person was lying, where he had been, and from where he has come: there are channels of the heart called Hita, stretching from the heart to the membrane around it. They are as fine as a hair split a thousand times, holding a subtle substance, tawny, white, black, yellow, and red. He is in these then. When, asleep, he sees no dream, he becomes one in this breath. Then speech enters him with all names; sight enters him with all forms; hearing enters him with all sounds; mind enters him with all its thoughts. When he wakes, just as sparks from a blazing fire scatter in every direction, so the breaths scatter from this Self, each to its own dwelling; from the breaths come the deities, and from the deities the worlds. As a razor lies within its case, or the all-sustaining fire within its nest, so this aware Self has entered this body, this self, down to the hairs and down to the nails.”

²⁰ These selves attend upon this Self as a chief’s own people attend upon him. Just as one takes enjoyment with the best of one’s own people, or a chief’s own people enjoy their chief, so this aware Self takes enjoyment through these selves, and these selves enjoy that Self. As long as Indra did not know this Self, the Asuras overcame him. When he knew it, he slew the Asuras and conquered them; he attained preeminence, sovereignty, and lordship over all the gods. In the same way, one who knows this casts off all evils and attains preeminence, sovereignty, and lordship over all beings—one who knows this, one who knows this.

Om. May my speech be grounded in my mind. May my mind be grounded in my speech. Be manifest to me, be manifest. Be the two anchors of the Veda for me. May what I have heard never leave me.

Through this study I join day and night. I will speak what is right. I will speak what is true. May that protect me. May that protect the speaker. Protect me; protect the speaker.

Om. Peace, peace, peace.

Here ends the Kaushitaki-Brahmana Upanishad.