



# Kena Upanishad

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*Musean Translation*

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Translated by Michael Berardi

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## THIS EDITION

Mouseia's complete machine-assisted Musean translation, made directly from the Sanskrit and reviewed against it, covering four sections and all 35 source-numbered verses with the opening and closing invocation. Sanskrit Wikisource contributors' transcription, revision 407400, CC BY-SA 4.0; the underlying ancient text is public domain.

## TRANSLATOR

Michael Berardi

## THE WORK

Written c. 1st millennium BCE · Upanishad

## SOURCE

Original text from [sa.wikisource.org](https://sa.wikisource.org).

## GAPS AND UNCERTAINTIES

Received Sanskrit Wikisource text at revision 407400; no printed base edition identified on the page. Its first section numbers nine passages, giving 35 in all. Editorial footnote and commentary/navigation excluded; pluta vowel notation retained in Original.

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## Section 1

Om. May my limbs grow strong—speech, breath, eye,  
ear, and all my strength and senses.

All is Brahman, revealed in the Upanishads.

May I never reject Brahman; may Brahman  
never reject me. Let there be no rejection; let there be no rejection of me.  
May the virtues spoken of in the Upanishads abide in me,  
who delight in that Self; may they abide in me.

Om. Peace, peace, peace.

- <sup>1</sup> Om. At whose wish does the mind fly forth, impelled?  
Who harnesses the foremost breath to set it moving?  
At whose wish do people utter this speech?  
What god joins eye and ear to their work?
- <sup>2</sup> That is the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, the speech of speech,  
the breath of breath, the eye of the eye.  
The wise, leaving these behind, depart from this world and become immortal.
- <sup>3</sup> The eye does not reach it, nor does speech, nor the mind.  
We do not know; we do not understand how one might teach it.
- <sup>4</sup> It is other than the known, and beyond the unknown.  
So we have heard from those of old who explained it to us.
- <sup>5</sup> What speech cannot express, but through which speech is expressed—  
know that alone as Brahman, not what people worship here.
- <sup>6</sup> What the mind cannot think, but by which, they say, the mind is known—  
know that alone as Brahman, not what people worship here.
- <sup>7</sup> What the eye cannot see, but through which the eyes see—  
know that alone as Brahman, not what people worship here.
- <sup>8</sup> What the ear cannot hear, but through which hearing itself is heard—  
know that alone as Brahman, not what people worship here.

- <sup>9</sup> What breath cannot breathe, but through which breath is led onward—  
know that alone as Brahman, not what people worship here.

## Section 2

- <sup>1</sup> “If you think, ‘I know it well,’ then surely you know  
only a little of Brahman’s form—  
what is of it in you and what is of it among the gods. So now  
it remains for you to inquire.” “I think it is known.”
- <sup>2</sup> “I do not think, ‘I know it well’; nor do I think, ‘I do not know it.’ I know it  
too.  
Whoever among us understands this understands it: not ‘I do not know it,’ and  
‘I know it’ too.”
- <sup>3</sup> For whom it is not thought, it is understood; whoever thinks it understood  
does not know it.  
Unknown to those who know, known to those who do not know.
- <sup>4</sup> Understood in every act of awareness, it is truly understood: through it one  
finds immortality.  
Through the Self one finds strength; through knowledge one finds the  
immortal.
- <sup>5</sup> If one has known it here, then there is truth;  
if one has not known it here, great is the loss.  
Discerning it in being after being, the wise  
depart from this world and become immortal.

## Section 3

- <sup>1</sup> Brahman won a victory for the gods. In that victory  
of Brahman, the gods exalted themselves.

- 2 They thought, "This victory is ours alone; this glory is ours alone."  
Brahman knew their thought and appeared before them. They did not know what this wondrous being was.
- 3 They said to Agni, "Jatavedas, find out what this wondrous being is." "So be it."
- 4 He rushed toward it. It asked him, "Who are you?" "I am Agni," he said. "I am Jatavedas."
- 5 "What power is there in you?" "I could burn all that is here on earth."
- 6 It set a blade of grass before him: "Burn this."  
He went at it with all his force, but could not burn it. From there he turned back. "I could not find out what this wondrous being is."
- 7 Then they said to Vayu, "Vayu, find out what this wondrous being is." "So be it."
- 8 He rushed toward it. It asked him, "Who are you?" "I am Vayu," he said. "I am Matarishvan."
- 9 "What power is there in you?" "I could carry away all that is here on earth."
- 10 It set a blade of grass before him: "Carry this away."  
He went at it with all his force, but could not carry it away.  
From there he turned back. "I could not find out what this wondrous being is."
- 11 Then they said to Indra, "Maghavan, find out what this wondrous being is."  
"So be it."  
He rushed toward it, but it vanished from him.
- 12 In that very space he came upon a woman, shining with great splendor: Uma Haimavati. He asked her, "What was this wondrous being?"

## Section 4

- 1 "It was Brahman," she said. "It is in Brahman's victory that you glory."  
Only then did he learn that it was Brahman.

- <sup>2</sup> That is why these gods—Agni, Vayu, and Indra—surpass, as it were, the other gods:  
they touched it most nearly; they were the first to learn that it was Brahman.
- <sup>3</sup> That is why Indra surpasses, as it were, the other gods:  
he touched it most nearly; he was the first to learn that it was Brahman.
- <sup>4</sup> This is the indication of it: like the flash of lightning, like the blink of an eye.  
So it is in relation to the gods.
- <sup>5</sup> Now in relation to the self: the mind seems to go toward it,  
and through the mind one remembers it again and again—this is thought.
- <sup>6</sup> It is called Tadvanam, “the Beloved”; as “the Beloved” it is to be revered.  
Whoever knows it in this way—  
all beings long for that one.
- <sup>7</sup> “Sir, teach me the Upanishad.” “The Upanishad has been told to you.  
It is the Upanishad of Brahman that we have told you.”
- <sup>8</sup> Austerity, self-restraint, and action are its foundation; the Vedas are all its limbs;  
truth is its dwelling.
- <sup>9</sup> Whoever knows it in this way, casting off evil, stands firm in the endless, highest heavenly world—stands firm.  
Om. May my limbs grow strong—speech, breath, eye,  
ear, and all my strength and senses.  
All is Brahman, revealed in the Upanishads.  
May I never reject Brahman; may Brahman  
never reject me. Let there be no rejection; let there be no rejection of me.  
May the virtues spoken of in the Upanishads abide in me,  
who delight in that Self; may they abide in me.  
Om. Peace, peace, peace.