



Maitri Upanishad

UNKNOWN

Plain English Translation

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Translated by Michael Berardi

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TRANSLATOR

Michael Berardi

THE WORK

Written Date uncertain · Upanishad

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Edition dated 26 October 2026

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Invocation



Om. May my limbs grow strong: speech, life-breath, sight, hearing,
and strength and all the senses.

Everything is Brahman as taught in the Upanishads. May I not reject Brahman.

May Brahman

not reject me. Let there be no rejection; let there be no rejection of me.

Devoted to that Self, may the teachings
of the Upanishads
be in me. May they be in me.

Om. Peace. Peace. Peace.

Prapathaka 1



Om. There was a king named Bṛhadratha. Having put his eldest son in charge of the kingdom, he considered this body impermanent, became detached from it, and went into the forest. There he undertook the most intense discipline, standing with his arms raised and looking at the sun. At the end of a thousand, a sage came to him: the blessed Śākāyanya, who knew the Self. Like smokeless fire, his radiance seemed to burn everything. He said to the king, “Rise, rise! Choose a gift.” The king bowed to him and said, “Sir, I do not know the Self. We hear that you know reality. Tell us about it.” “What you chose before is impossible. Do not ask this question, descendant of Ikṣvāku. Choose other things you want.” Touching Śākāyanya’s feet, the king spoke these verses: || १.१ ||

“Sir, this body is fouled by bones, skin, tendons, marrow, flesh, semen, blood, mucus, and tears. It is a mass of feces, urine, wind, bile, and phlegm, foul-smelling and without substance. What use is enjoying desires in it? || १.२ ||

“This body is struck by desire, anger, greed, fear, despair, envy, separation from what is loved, contact with what is disliked, hunger, thirst, old age, death, disease, grief, and the rest. What use is enjoying desires in it? || १.३ ||

“We see that all this will decay. These biting flies, mosquitoes, and the rest disappear like grass: they come into being and are destroyed. || १.४ ||

“But why speak of them? There are others, great bowmen and universal rulers: kings such as Sudyumna, Bhūridyumna, Indradyumna, Kuvalayāśva, Yauvanāśva, Vaddhiyāśva, Aśvapati, Śaśabindu, Hāriścandra, Ambariṣa, Nanūkta, Svayāti, Yayāti, Anarāya, Ukṣasena, Uttha, Marutta, and Bharata. While their relatives look on, they leave their great splendor behind and pass from this world to the other. || १.५||

“But why speak of them? We see that even the Gandharvas, Asuras, yakshas, demons, hosts of spirits, ghouls, serpents, possessing powers, and the rest come to an end. || १.६||

“But why speak of them? Great oceans dry up; mountains fall; the pole star moves; trees stand in their places; the earth sinks; gods are displaced. Here I am, in a cycle of existence like this. What use is enjoying desires, when those who rely on them are seen to return here again and again? You must lift me out. I am like a frog in a dark well in this cycle of existence. Sir, you are our way out. You are our way out.” || १.७||

Here ends Prapathaka 1.

Prapathaka 2



The blessed Śākāyanya was very pleased and said to the king, “Great King Bṛhadratha, son of the foremost standard-bearer of Ikṣvāku’s line, you have done what needed to be done. You are famous by the name Marut. This indeed is your Self.” “Sir, which one? Describe it,” he said to him. || २.१ ||

“The one who rises upward with support from outside, moving yet not moving, and drives away darkness: that is the Self,” the blessed one said. “This peaceful one rises from this body, reaches the highest light, and appears in its own form. This is the Self. This is immortal, free from fear. This is Brahman.” || २.२ ||

“King, the blessed Maitreya explained to us this knowledge of Brahman, the knowledge of all the Upanishads. I will tell it to you. We hear of the Vālakhilyas, free from evil, intensely radiant, whose seed rises upward. They said to Prajāpati, ‘Sir, this body is unconscious, like a cart. Who has such power, beyond the senses, that this body has been established as if conscious? Who sets it in motion? Sir, tell us this.’ He said to them: || २.३ ||

“‘The one heard to be above speech is clean, purified, empty, peaceful, life-breath, a self with no master, limitless, inexhaustible, firm, lasting, unborn, and independent. It stands in its own greatness. Through it this body has been established as if conscious. It is what sets the body in motion.’ They said, ‘Sir, how can such a one, without desire, establish this body as if conscious and set it in motion? How?’ He said to them: || २.४ ||

““This subtle one, called the Person, cannot be grasped or seen. Through a part of itself it acts here with awareness. As with someone asleep, it awakens with awareness. This part of it is sheer consciousness, the knower of the field in each person, marked by intention, determination, and self-importance: Prajāpati, whose eyes are everywhere. Through this conscious one, the body is established as if conscious. It is what sets the body in motion.’ They said, ‘Sir, how can such a one act through a part of itself?’ He said to them: || २.५||

““In the beginning there was Prajāpati. Alone, he found no pleasure. He meditated on himself and created many creatures. He saw them, his own self, standing like posts, not awake and without breath. He found no pleasure. He thought, “I will enter them to awaken them.” Making himself like wind, he entered them. He did not enter as one. Dividing himself into five, he is called life-breath, downward breath, balancing breath, upward breath, and pervading breath. || २.६||

““What rises upward is the life-breath. What moves downward is the downward breath. What places the largest part of food in the downward breath and carries its smallest part evenly to every limb is the balancing breath. What brings up and swallows what has been drunk and eaten is the upward breath. What spreads through these vessels is the pervading breath. || २.७||

““Then Upāṃśu becomes Antaryāma, and Antaryāma becomes Upāṃśu. Between the two there is warmth. This warmth has substance. It is the Person. The Person is the fire Vaiśvānara. Elsewhere it is also said: “This is the fire Vaiśvānara, the Person within, by which the food that is eaten is cooked.” Its sound is what one hears when covering the ears. When someone is about to leave the body, that sound is no longer heard. || २.८||

““Dividing itself into five, this one is placed in the cave. Made of mind, with life-breath as its body, taking many forms, with intentions that come true, it is the Self. Standing inside the heart, it thought, “I have not reached my objects. Let me become those objects.” Breaking through these openings of its own, it rose and eats the objects of the senses through five rays. These organs of knowing are its rays. The organs of action are its horses; the body is the chariot; the

mind is the driver; its goad is made of nature. Driven by this, the body turns around like a wheel. In death, the body is not established as if conscious. This one is what sets it in motion. || २.९||

“This is the Self. As if brought under another’s control and overwhelmed by the results of good and bad actions, it moves through individual bodies. Because it is unmanifest, subtle, invisible, impossible to grasp, and without a sense of possession, it has no fixed place. Though it does not act, it stands as if acting. || २.१०||

“It is clean, firm, unmoving, untouched, undistracted, and free from longing. It stands like a spectator, experiencing its own conduct. Covering itself with a cloth made of the qualities, it remains. So it remains.” || २.११|| Here ends Prapathaka 2.

Prapathaka 3



They said, “Sir, if this is how you describe the Self’s greatness, what is this other, lower self? It is overwhelmed by the results of good and bad actions, enters good and bad births, and wanders around, going downward or upward, overcome by opposites. Which one is this?” He said to them: || ३.१ ||

“There is indeed another, lower, elemental self. Overwhelmed by the results of good and bad actions, it enters good and bad births and wanders around, going downward or upward, overcome by opposites. This is its explanation. The five subtle elements are called elements; the five great elements are also called elements. Their combination is called the body. What is called the body is called the elemental self. There is also its Self, like a drop on a lotus leaf. This elemental self is overcome by nature’s qualities. Being overcome, it becomes confused. It does not see the blessed lord within itself, the one who makes it act. Satisfied by streams of qualities, made dirty, unsteady, restless, greedy, longing, and distracted, it becomes self-important. Thinking ‘I am that; this is mine,’ it binds itself by itself, like a bird in a net. Overwhelmed by the consequences of what it has done, it wanders around. || ३.२ ||

“Elsewhere it is also said: ‘The one who acts is this elemental self. The Person inside makes it act through the instruments. An iron ball, penetrated by fire and struck by workmen, takes many forms. In the same way, this elemental self, penetrated by the Person inside and struck by the qualities, takes many forms. What has three qualities and develops into 8,400,000 kinds of birth is

elemental and has three qualities. This is the form of diversity. These qualities are driven by the Person as a wheel is driven by someone turning it. When an iron ball is struck, the fire is not affected. In the same way, that Person is not affected. This elemental self is affected because it is closely joined to the body.’

|| ३.३ ||

“Elsewhere it is also said: ‘This body comes from sexual intercourse. Without consciousness, it comes out through the urinary opening, in a hell indeed. It is built of bones, plastered with flesh, and bound with skin. It is filled with feces, urine, bile, phlegm, marrow, fat, grease, and many other impurities. It lies collapsed, like a case.’ || ३.४ ||

“Elsewhere it is also said: ‘Confusion, fear, despair, sleep, drowsiness, wounds, old age, grief, hunger, thirst, misery, anger, disbelief, ignorance, envy, lack of compassion, stupidity, shamelessness, dishonesty, arrogance, and unevenness belong to darkness. Thirst, affection, attachment, greed, violence, pleasure, preoccupation with seeing, jealousy, dwelling on desire, restlessness, the wish to take things, acquiring wealth, favoring friends, depending on possessions, hatred of unwanted sense objects, and attachment to wanted ones belong to passion. This elemental self is filled with these and overcome by them. That is why it takes many forms. It takes many forms.’” || ३.५ || Here ends Prapathaka 3.

Prapathaka 4



Those whose seed rose upward were greatly amazed. Coming close together, they said, “Sir, honor to you. Teach us. You are our way out; we know no other. Who is the guest of this elemental self through whom it can leave this behind and become united with another?” He said to them: || ४.१ ||

“Elsewhere it is also said: ‘What it has done before holds it back like eddies in great rivers. The coming of its death is as hard to stop as the sea’s tide. It is tied like an animal by ropes made of good and bad results. It has no independence, like someone in prison, and is surrounded by fear, like someone in Yama’s territory. It delights like someone drunk, though not drunk on wine; it wanders around like someone possessed by evil. Its sight is distorted, like someone bitten by a great serpent. Passion blinds it as if it were in deep darkness. It is made of illusion, like a magic show, and sees falsely, as in a dream. It has no substance, like the center of a banana stem. Its costume lasts only a moment, like an actor’s. Its false appearance pleases the mind, like a painted wall.’ It is also said: ‘Sound, touch, and the other objects of the senses stand as if they were harms. Attached to them, the elemental self does not remember the highest place.’ || ४.२ ||

“This is the remedy for the elemental self: acquiring knowledge, following the proper way, and proceeding through one’s own stages of life. One’s own duty supports everything else as a trunk supports its other branches. Through it one rises; otherwise one falls downward. This one is bound by the duty pre-

scribed in the Vedas. One does not become a member of a stage of life by breaking one's own duty. Someone established in those stages is called a practitioner of discipline. This too is said: 'Without discipline, one does not reach meditation on the Self or purification of action.' As it is said: 'Through discipline one reaches clarity; through clarity one reaches mind; through mind one reaches the Self. By reaching the Self, one turns back.' ॥ ४.३॥

"Here are these verses: 'Just as a fire without fuel dies down in its own source, so the mind, when its activities stop, dies down in its own source. ॥ १॥ For the mind quieted in its own source, moving toward truth and not confused, sense objects are false, following the power of action. ॥ २॥ The mind itself is the cycle of rebirth. Work to purify it. Whatever a person's mind is, that is what the person becomes. This is the lasting secret. ॥ ३॥ Through the mind's clarity one destroys action, both good and bad. With a clear self, established in the Self, one enjoys happiness that does not end. ॥ ४॥ If a creature's mind were as attached to Brahman as it is to the range of sense objects, who would not be freed from bondage? ॥ ५॥ The mind is said to be of two kinds, clean and unclean. It is unclean when it forms desires; it is clean when free from desire. ॥ ६॥ Make the mind completely still, neither sinking nor distracted. When it reaches the state of no mind, that is the highest place. ॥ ७॥ Restrain it in the heart until it has ceased. This is knowledge and liberation. Everything else is an expansion of books. ॥ ८॥ The happiness one finds when the mind has been washed clean of dirt through absorption and placed in the Self cannot be described in speech. One grasps it personally through one's inner awareness. ॥ ९॥ One cannot distinguish water in water, fire in fire, or space in space. With the mind having entered within in this way, a person is freed. ॥ १०॥ The mind alone is the cause of human bondage and liberation. It is held to bring bondage when attached to objects and liberation when free from objects.' ॥ ११॥ Then there is this praise of Kautsāyāni: 'You are Brahmā; you are Vishnu; you are Rudra; you are Prajāpati. You are fire, Varuṇa, and wind; you are Indra; you are the maker of night. ॥ १२॥ You are Manu and Yama; you are earth; you are the unfailing one. For your own purpose and for the purpose belonging to your nature, you stand in many forms in heaven. ॥

१३॥ Lord of everything, honor to you. You are the Self of everything and the maker of every work. You eat everything; you are the magic of everything; you are the lord who delights in playing with everything. ॥ १४॥ Honor to you whose Self is peaceful. Honor to the most hidden, the inconceivable, the immeasurable, without beginning or end.’ ॥ १५॥ ॥ ४.४॥

“This was darkness alone. Driven by the higher one, it afterward became an object. This is the form of passion. Passion, when driven, became uneven. This is the form of darkness. Darkness, when driven, flowed out of darkness. This is the form of clarity. Clarity, when driven, flowed out of clarity. This part is sheer consciousness, the knower of the field in each person, marked by intention, determination, and self-importance: Prajāpati. His foremost bodies are said to be Brahmā, Rudra, and Vishnu. His part belonging to passion is this Brahmā; his part belonging to darkness is this Rudra; his part belonging to clarity is Vishnu. This one has become three, eight, eleven, twelve, and countless forms. Having come into being, he moves among beings. He became the support and ruler of all beings. That is the Self, inside and outside, inside and outside.” ॥ ४.५॥ Here ends Prapathaka 4.

Prapathaka 5



This one maintains itself in two forms: this life-breath and that sun. These two existed, fivefold in name, inside and outside. They alternate through day and night. That sun is the outer Self; life-breath is the inner Self. Through the movement of the outer Self, the movement of the inner Self is inferred. This is what is said. Someone who knows, who is free from evil, who oversees things, whose mind is clear, who is devoted to that, and who has turned his eyes inward can infer the movement of the outer Self through the movement of the inner Self. This is what is said. The golden Person within the sun, who sees me as golden, is the very one who lives within the lotus of the heart and eats food. || ५.२ ||

The one who lives within the lotus of the heart and eats food is the fire dwelling in heaven, belonging to the sun, called time, unseen. It eats all beings as food. What is the lotus? What is it made of? This space is that lotus. Its four main directions and four intermediate directions are arranged in it. This fire is here; those two, life-breath and the sun, are beyond. One should worship these two with the syllable Om, the sacred utterances, and the Sāvitrî verse. || ५.२ ||

Brahman has two forms, with shape and without shape. What has a shape is not real; what has no shape is real. That is Brahman. What is Brahman is light; what is light is the sun. Its Self is the syllable Om. It divided itself into three:

Om has three units of sound. Through these, all this is woven lengthwise and crosswise in it. This is what is said: “This sun is Om.” Meditating in this way, one should bring the Self into union. || 4.3 ||

Elsewhere it is also said: “The raised chant is the sacred syllable, and the sacred syllable is the raised chant.” That sun is the raised chant and the sacred syllable. This is what is said: “The raised chant, called the sacred syllable, is the guide, having name and form, free from sleep, old age, and death, also to be known in five forms, hidden in the cave.” This is also said: “The root is above; the branches of Brahman are space, wind, fire, water, earth, and the rest. This Brahman is held by one.” Its radiance is that sun, and this is also the radiance of the syllable Om. Therefore one should constantly worship it through Om. This alone makes its essence known. This is what is said: “This very syllable is sacred. Knowing this very syllable, whatever one wants becomes one’s own.” || 4.8 ||

Elsewhere it is also said: “Its body thunders: it is Om. It has gender, feminine, masculine, and neuter. It has brightness as fire, wind, and sun. It has rulers as Rudra and Vishnu. It has mouths as the householder’s fire, the southern fire, and the offering fire. It knows as the Rig, Yajur, and Sāma Vedas. It has worlds as earth, atmosphere, and heaven. It has time as past, present, and future. It has heat as life-breath, fire, and sun. It has nourishment as food, water, and moon. It has awareness as understanding, mind, and the sense of I. Some say it has breath as life-breath, downward breath, and pervading breath. Saying ‘I let go,’ these are presented and offered.” This is what is said: “Satyakāma, this syllable Om is the higher and the lower.” || 4.9 ||

This was open wide. Prajāpati, who is truth, practiced intense discipline and then spoke: “Earth, atmosphere, heaven.” This body of Prajāpati, consisting of the worlds, is his most solid body. Heaven is its head, atmosphere its navel, earth its feet, and the sun its eye. A person’s great reach depends on the eye, for through the eye a person moves among objects. The eye is truth. The Person present in the eye speaks about all objects. Therefore one should worship with “Earth, atmosphere, heaven.” Prajāpati is thereby worshiped as food, as the Self

of all and as the eye of all. This is what is said: “This is Prajāpati’s body that supports everything. All this is contained within it, and it is contained within all this.” Therefore one should worship it. || ५.६||

“That of Savitṛ which is worth choosing”: that sun is Savitṛ. Those who teach Brahman say that someone who wants the Self should choose him in this way. Then, “We meditate on the god’s radiance”: Savitṛ is established there. “We contemplate his radiance,” say those who teach Brahman. Then, “May he inspire our thoughts”: thoughts are acts of understanding. “May he inspire ours,” say those who teach Brahman. As for radiance, what is placed within this sun, in the pupil and in the eye, is called radiance. It moves through its rays, so it is called radiance. It burns, so it is called radiance, say those who teach Brahman. Its name points to lighting up these worlds, giving color to these beings, and going: these creatures go into it and come out of it. Because it bears them, it is called radiance. It is called Sūrya from the bringing forth of enemies; Savitṛ from pressing forth; Āditya from giving; Pāvamāna from purifying; and Aditya from going. This is what is said: “Through the Self, the self called immortal is the perceiver, thinker, mover, creator, giver of joy, doer, speaker, taster, smeller, and toucher. It is everywhere, established in the body.” This is also said: “Where awareness has become dual, one hears, sees, smells, tastes, and touches. The Self knows everything. But where awareness has become nondual, free from effect and cause, beyond description, beyond comparison, beyond any defining account—what could one say of it?” || ५.७||

This very Self is Iṣāna, Śambhu, Bhava, Rudra, Prajāpati, the creator of everything, Hiraṇyagarbha, truth, life-breath, the swan, the peaceful one, Vishnu, Nārāyaṇa, Arka, Savitṛ, Dhātṛ, the sovereign, Indra, and Indu. It burns, covered by fire, by thousand-eyed golden joy. It must be sought and known. After giving every being freedom from fear, one should go to the forest, put aside the objects of the senses, and find it within one’s own body. “Taking every form, yellow-brown, Jātavedas, the final refuge, the one burning light: with a thousand rays, present in a hundred ways, the life-breath of creatures—this sun rises.” || ५.८|| Here ends Prapathaka 5.

Prapathaka 6



Now, the sixth Prapathaka. The Self maintains itself in two forms: this life-breath and that sun. It has two paths, inside and outside. These alternate with day and night. That sun is the outer Self; life-breath is the inner Self. So the movement of the inner Self can be inferred from the movement of the outer Self. This is what is said. But someone who knows, who is free of evil, who controls the senses, whose mind is clear, who is devoted to that Self, and who has turned his eyes inward can infer the movement of the outer Self from the movement of the inner Self. This too is what is said. The golden person inside the sun, who looks at this earth from his golden dwelling, is the very one who lives inside the lotus of the heart and eats food. ॥ ६.१ ॥

The one who lives inside the lotus of the heart and eats food is the fire that lives in heaven. It belongs to the sun, is called time, and cannot be seen. It eats all beings as food. What is this lotus? What is it made of? The lotus is this space. Its four main directions and four intermediate directions are arranged as petals. The life-breath and the sun move here within it. One should worship these with the syllable Om, the sacred utterances, and the Sāvitrî verse. ॥ ६.२ ॥

Brahman has two forms: one with a shape and one without a shape. What has a shape is not real; what has no shape is real. That is Brahman. That is light. That light is the sun. It came to have the syllable Om as its nature. It divided

itself into three: Om has three units of sound. “Through these all this is woven lengthwise and crosswise; I am this.” This is what is said. One should meditate on the sun in this way, as Om, and bring the Self into union. || ६.३ ||

Elsewhere it is also said: “The udgîtha, the raised chant, is the praṇava, the sound Om; and the praṇava is the udgîtha.” That sun is the udgîtha, and it is the praṇava. This is what is said: “The udgîtha, called the praṇava, is the guide. Its form is light. It is free of sleep, aging, and death. It has three feet and three syllables. It is also to be known in five forms and is hidden in the cave of the heart.” This is also said: “Brahman has its root above and has three feet. Its branches are space, wind, fire, water, earth, and the rest. It is the single tree called the sacred fig.” This is Brahman. Its radiance is that sun, and that radiance also belongs to the syllable Om. Therefore one should constantly worship it by means of Om. Om alone brings an understanding of it. This is what is said: “This very syllable is sacred; this very syllable is supreme. When someone knows this very syllable, whatever that person wants becomes theirs.” || ६.४ ||

Elsewhere it is also said: “Its body has sound: it is Om. It has gender: feminine, masculine, and neuter. It has brightness: fire, wind, and sun. It has rulers: Brahmā, Rudra, and Vishnu. It has mouths: the household fire, the southern fire, and the offering fire. It has knowledge: the Ṛg, Yajur, and Sāma Vedas. It has worlds: earth, middle space, and heaven. It has time: past, present, and future. It has heat: life-breath, fire, and sun. It has nourishment: food, water, and moon. It has awareness: understanding, mind, and the sense of ‘I.’ It has breaths: life-breath, downward breath, and circulating breath.” So, when Om is spoken, these forms are praised, worshiped, and given offerings. This is what is said: “Satyakāma, this syllable Om is both the higher and the lower Brahman.” || ६.५ ||

This world had not yet been spoken. Prajāpati, who is truth, practiced intense discipline and then spoke: “Earth, middle space, heaven.” This body of Prajāpati, consisting of the worlds, is his most solid body. Heaven is its head, middle space its navel, earth its feet, and the sun its eye. A person’s broad reach depends on the eye, for through the eye a person moves among objects. The eye is truth. The person who lives in the eye moves among all objects. Therefore

one should worship with the words “Earth, middle space, heaven.” In this way Prajāpati is worshiped as the Self of all and as the eye of all. This is what is said: “This is Prajāpati’s body that supports everything. Everything here is contained in it, and it is contained in everything here.” Therefore one should worship it.
॥ ६.६॥

“That of Savitṛ which is worth choosing”: that sun is Savitṛ. Those who teach Brahman say that someone who wants the Self should choose him in this way. “We meditate on the god’s radiance”: Savitṛ is the god, and those who teach Brahman say, “We contemplate what is called his radiance.” “May he inspire our thoughts”: thoughts are acts of understanding, and those who teach Brahman say, “May he inspire ours.” As for “radiance,” the star placed within that sun is also in the eye and is called radiance. It moves by means of rays, and so it is called radiance. Because it burns things up, it is called radiance; those who teach Brahman call it Rudra. The syllable bha means that it lights up these worlds; ra means that it gives color to these beings; ga means that these creatures go into it and come out of it. Because of this bha-ra-ga, it is called bharga, radiance. It is called Sūrya because it is constantly being brought forth; Savitṛ because it brings forth; Aditya because it takes in; the Purifier because it purifies; and Water because it nourishes. This is what is said: “It is the Self of the self, the leader, the one called immortal, the perceiver, thinker, mover, excreter, giver of pleasure, doer, speaker, taster, smeller, seer, and hearer. It also touches. Though it is everywhere, it lives within the body.” This is also said: “Where awareness has become dual, one hears, sees, smells, tastes, and touches. The Self knows everything. But where awareness has become nondual, free of effect, cause, and action, beyond description, without comparison or any defining account—what is that? It cannot be put into words.” ॥ ६.७॥

This very Self is Iṣāna, Śambhu, Bhava, Rudra, Prajāpati, the creator of all, Hiraṇyagarbha, truth, life-breath, the swan, the teacher, Vishnu, Nārāyaṇa, Arka, Savitṛ, the maker, the arranger, the sovereign, Indra, and Indu. It burns like fire covered by fire, enclosed in a golden egg with a thousand eyes. One must seek to know it and search for it. After giving every being freedom from fear, one should go into the forest, put aside the objects of the senses, and dis-

cover it within one's own body. "Taking every form, yellow-brown, Jātavedas, the final refuge, the one burning light; with a thousand rays, present in a hundred ways, the life-breath of creatures—this sun rises." || ६.८||

So someone who knows this has both forms as his Self. He meditates on the Self alone and sacrifices to the Self alone. Meditation is the mind engaged in practice, the mind praised by the learned. If the mind is foul and contaminated by leftovers, he should cleanse it with this. He recites the formula: "Whatever is left over, whatever has been touched by leftovers, whatever has been given by a wrongdoer or comes from a household made impure by a death or a birth—may Vasu's purifier, fire, and the rays of Savitṛ cleanse my food and whatever other wrong I have done." He first surrounds the food with water. Then he makes five offerings: "An offering to the life-breath! An offering to the downward breath! An offering to the circulating breath! An offering to the balancing breath! An offering to the rising breath!" Next he eats what remains, keeping silent. Afterward he surrounds it with water once more. When he has rinsed his mouth, as someone sacrificing to the Self, he should meditate on the Self with these two verses, beginning "Life-breath is fire" and "You are all": "Life-breath is fire, the highest Self, joined to the five winds. May it be satisfied and satisfy the whole universe, since it eats the whole universe. You are all. You are Vaiśvānara. Everything that comes into being is supported by you. May all offerings enter you, and all creatures, there where you are immortal in all." In this way, by following this procedure, he does not become something to be eaten again. || ६.९||

There is something further to know: the next development of this sacrifice to the Self concerns food and its eater. This is its explanation. The conscious person lives within primal matter. He is the eater and eats the food that belongs to nature. This elemental self is his food; primal matter makes it. So what is eaten has the three qualities, while the person inside is the eater. Here is the evidence called direct observation: animals come from seed, so seed is what is eaten. This also explains why primal matter is food. Therefore the person is the eater, nature is what is eaten, and he eats while living within it. The food belonging to nature is a manifestation extending from the great principle down

to the particular elements, because it develops through the differences between the three qualities. This also explains the fourteenfold path. This world, which has become food, is known as pleasure, pain, and delusion. The taste of a seed cannot be grasped until it produces a new being. That being too becomes food in its three stages—childhood, youth, and old age—because it changes. In this way primal matter is apprehended when it becomes manifest. Within it, understanding and the rest become tastes: decision, intention, and the sense of ‘I.’ Then the five objects of the senses become tastes, as do all activities of the senses and all activities of the life-breaths. So both the manifest and the unmanifest are food. Their eater is without qualities. His awareness is established by the fact that he eats. Just as fire is the eater among the gods and Soma is food, someone who knows this eats food through fire alone. This elemental self is called Soma, while the person is called fire. Because it is said that he has the unmanifest as his mouth, the person eats what has the three qualities through the unmanifest as his mouth. Someone who knows this is a renunciant, a practitioner of yoga, and one who sacrifices to the Self. Women filled with desire may enter an empty house, but no one there touches them. In the same way, someone who does not touch the objects of the senses that come in is a renunciant, a practitioner of yoga, and one who sacrifices to the Self. || ६.१० ||

Food is the highest form of this Self, for this life-breath consists of food. If a person does not eat, he cannot think, hear, touch, see, speak, smell, or taste, and he lets go of his life-breaths. This is what is said. But if he eats, he becomes full of life-breath and can think, hear, touch, speak, taste, smell, and see. This is what is said: “From food are born all the creatures that live on earth. By food they live, and into it they finally return.” || ६.११ ||

Elsewhere it is also said: “All these beings rush about day after day, trying to get food. The sun takes in food with its rays, and it burns because of that food. These life-breaths, soaked with food, cook it. Fire blazes because of food. Brahman designed this world out of a desire for food. Therefore one should worship food as the Self.” This is what is said: “From food beings are born. Once born, they grow through food. It is eaten, and it eats beings. That is why it is called food.” || ६.१२ ||

Elsewhere it is also said: “This food is the body of the blessed Vishnu called the Supporter of All. Life-breath is the essence of food; mind is the essence of life-breath; understanding is the essence of mind; joy is the essence of understanding.” Someone who knows this has food, life-breath, mind, understanding, and joy. Someone who knows this lives within all the beings here that eat food, and eats food in them all. “Food alone is ageless; food is known to bring people together. Food is the life-breath of animals; food is known as the first-born and the healer.” || ६.१३ ||

Elsewhere it is also said: “Food is the source of all this. Time is the source of food, and the sun is the source of time.” Its form is the year with its twelve parts, built up from units of time beginning with a blink of the eye. Half of it belongs to fire and half to Varuṇa. The fiery half runs in forward order from Maghā to the midpoint of Śraviṣṭhā. The lunar half runs in reverse order from Sārpa to the midpoint of Śraviṣṭhā. Each of these has nine divisions of its own, arranged according to its movement. These very small divisions are the measure, for time is measured by them. Without a measure, what is measured cannot be known. What is measured can itself become a measure when considered separately, to make itself known. This is what is said: “Through as many divisions as time has, through that many this sun moves. If someone worships time as Brahman, time withdraws very far from that person.” This is also said: “From time beings flow, and through time they grow. In time they also come to their end. Time is a form that has no form.” || ६.१४ ||

Brahman has two forms: time and the timeless. What comes before the sun is timeless, outside time. What begins with the sun is time, which has divisions. The form of time with divisions is the year. These creatures are born from the year. Once born, they grow through the year, and into the year they disappear. Therefore the year is Prajāpati, time, food, the home of Brahman, and the Self. This is what is said: “Time cooks all beings within the great Self. But there is that in which time itself is cooked; whoever knows it knows the Veda.” || ६.१५ ||

This time has bodily form. It is the ocean that rules all creatures. Present there, it is called Savitr̥. From it come the moon, constellations, planets, years, and the rest. From these comes everything here. Whatever good or bad is seen here in the world comes from these. So Brahman has the sun as its Self. One should worship the sun under the name of time. Some say, “The sun is Brahman.” This is what is said: “The offering priest, the eater, the offering, the sacred formula, the sacrifice, Vishnu, Prajāpati—he is all these, whoever he may be, the lord and witness who shines in that disk.” ॥ ६.१६॥

In the beginning this was Brahman: one, infinite to the east, infinite to the south, infinite to the west, infinite to the north, infinite above and below, infinite everywhere. Directions such as east do not apply to it, nor does across, down, or up. This highest Self cannot be guessed at or measured, reasoned out or thought of. Its nature is space. When everything is destroyed, it alone stays awake. From this space it awakens all this, which consists of consciousness alone. Through this alone this world is conceived, and into this it disappears. Its shining form is what burns in that sun, in smokeless fire, and as the even brighter light in the stomach that digests food. This is what is said: “The one in fire, the one here in the heart, and the one there in the sun are one and the same.” Someone who knows this reaches the oneness of the One. ॥ ६.१७॥

This is the method of putting it into practice: control of breathing, withdrawal of the senses, meditation, concentration, reflection, and complete absorption. These are called the six parts of yoga. When, through this, the seer sees the gold-colored creator and ruler, the person who is Brahman’s source, then, knowing, he leaves behind both good and evil deeds and unites everything in the highest, imperishable reality. This is what is said: “Just as animals and birds do not take shelter on a burning mountain, faults never find shelter in someone who knows Brahman.” ॥ ६.१८॥

Elsewhere it is also said: “When someone who knows has restrained the outward-moving mind and the objects of the senses, and has gathered them into the life-breath, he should remain without forming intentions. The living being called life-breath arose here from what has no life-breath. Therefore one should hold the life-breath in what is called the fourth state.” This is what is said:

“What has no thought lies at the center of thought. It is beyond thought, hidden, and highest. One should place the mind there. That is the sign that depends on nothing.” || ६.१९ ||

Elsewhere it is also said: “Beyond this comes concentration: pressing the tip of the tongue against the palate and restraining speech, mind, and life-breath. Through inquiry one sees Brahman. When the mind has ceased, one sees, through oneself, the Self, shining and smaller than the small. Having seen the Self through oneself, one becomes without a self. Through being without a self, one is beyond reckoning, without a source of birth, to be contemplated. This marks liberation. This is the highest secret.” As it is said: “Through the mind’s clarity one destroys action, both good and bad. With a clear self, established in the Self, one enjoys happiness that does not end.” || ६.२० ||

Elsewhere it is also said: “There is an upward channel called *Suṣumnā*, which carries the life-breath and is interrupted inside the palate. Through it, with life-breath, Om, and mind joined together, one should rise upward. Turning the tip back above the palate and disengaging the senses, greatness should look upon greatness. Then one becomes without a self. Through being without a self, one no longer shares in pleasure and pain; one reaches being alone.” As it is said: “First establish the higher one; then hold the breath. Cross to the other shore by means of the boundless, and afterward bring it into union at the crown of the head.” || ६.२१ ||

Elsewhere it is also said: “There are two forms of Brahman to meditate on: sound and what is without sound. Through sound alone, what is without sound is revealed. Here the sound is Om. Rising upward through it, one comes to rest in what has no sound.” It is said that this is the way, this is immortality, union with that, and release. Just as a spider climbs upward on its thread and reaches open space, so the meditator rises through Om and reaches independence. Others who teach sound proceed differently. By joining their thumbs to their ears, they hear the sound in the space inside the heart. It has seven comparisons: rivers, a small bell, a bronze wheel, frogs, a calling bird, rain, and a voice speaking in a place without wind. Passing beyond its separate characteristics, they come to rest in the higher Brahman, without sound and unmanifest.

There their qualities are no longer separate, and they cannot be told apart, just as different flavors become honey. As it is said: “Two forms of Brahman must be known: Brahman as sound and what is beyond it. Someone thoroughly versed in Brahman as sound reaches the higher Brahman.” || ६.२२ ||

Elsewhere it is also said: “Sound is this syllable Om. What is beyond it is peaceful, silent, free from fear and sorrow, joyful, satisfied, firm, unmoving, immortal, unfailing, and constant, called Vishnu. One should worship it to go beyond everything.” As it is said: “That god, higher and lower, is named Om. Without sound, having become empty, one should then practice at the place at the crown of the head.” || ६.२३ ||

Elsewhere it is also said: “The body is the bow; Om is the arrow, and the mind is its point. Piercing what is marked by darkness, it reaches darkness pervaded by what is not darkness. Piercing what is pervaded, one sees Brahman beyond darkness, flashing like the circle made by a moving firebrand, the color of the sun, full of power. It shines in that sun, in the moon, in fire, and in lightning. Having seen it, one reaches immortality.” As it is said: “Meditation is placed in the highest reality within and in its targets. From this, undifferentiated awareness reaches distinction. When the mind has dissolved, the happiness to which the Self alone bears witness is Brahman, immortal and bright. That is the way; that is the world.” || ६.२४ ||

Elsewhere it is also said: “The senses are withdrawn as in sleep. With thoroughly purified understanding, as if in a dream, one sees in the opening of the senses, without being under their control, the guide called the sacred syllable, whose form is light, free from sleep, old age, death, and sorrow. One then also becomes a guide called the sacred syllable, whose form is light, free from sleep, old age, death, and sorrow.” As it is said: “Because one joins the life-breath and Om, from which everything comes in many forms, or because they are joined, this is called yoga. The oneness of life-breath and mind, and of the senses too, and giving up every state of being: this is called yoga.” || ६.२५ ||

Elsewhere it is also said: “Just as a bird-catcher lifts creatures that move in water by a device of string and offers them into the fire in his belly, so one lifts these life-breaths through Om and offers them into the fire free from illness.

From this it becomes heated, like the earth. Just as heated ground, with clarified butter, blazes on contact with grass and wood, so what is called breathless blazes on contact with life-breath. What blazes is a form of Brahman, the highest place of Vishnu, and Rudra's very nature. Dividing itself in countless ways, it fills these worlds." As it is said: "Just as sparks come from fire and rays from the sun, so life-breaths and the rest come forth here from it, again and again, in their proper order." || ६.२६||

Elsewhere it is also said: "The body's warmth is the radiance of the highest, immortal, bodiless Brahman. This is its clarified butter. Though manifest, it is placed in the sky. Through single-minded attention, people open the space inside the heart so that it becomes like its light. From this one soon takes on its nature, just as an iron ball placed in the earth soon takes on the nature of earth. An iron ball that has become like earth is no longer affected by fire, smiths, and the rest. In the same way, the mind disappears together with its support." As it is said: "The covering made of space within the heart is joy, the highest dwelling. From it come our own being and yoga, and the radiance of fire and sun." || ६.२७||

Elsewhere it is also said:

"Go beyond the elements, senses, and their objects. Take the bow whose string is renunciation and whose staff is firmness. With an arrow made of freedom from self-importance, strike down the first guard at Brahman's door. He wears confusion as his crown and thirst and envy as earrings. Drowsiness and attachment are his staff; self-importance is his chief. Taking a bow with anger as its string and greed as its staff, and an arrow made of desire, he kills these creatures. Kill him. Cross the space inside the heart on the raft of Om. When the inner space has become visible, enter Brahman's hall as a miner seeking metals slowly enters a pit. Then, through the teaching received from a teacher, open Brahman's covering with its four nets.

"Then one is clean, purified, empty, peaceful, without breath, without a self, limitless, inexhaustible, firm, lasting, unborn, and independent. One stands in one's own greatness. Standing in one's own greatness, one looks at the wheel of movement as at a wheel that does not turn." As it is said:

“For an embodied person who practices for six months and is always free, limitless, supreme, hidden, complete yoga comes into operation.

But never for an embodied person pierced by passion and darkness, thoroughly inflamed,

and attached to children, wife, and family.” || ६.२८ ||

After saying this, Śākāyanya was within the heart. Having bowed to him, the king heard: “King, through this knowledge of Brahman, Prajāpati’s sons have climbed the path of Brahman.” Through practicing yoga, one gains contentment, endurance of opposites, and peace. One should not tell this deepest secret to someone who is neither a son nor a pupil, or to someone who is not peaceful. Give it to someone devoted to this alone and possessing every good quality. || ६.२९ ||

Om. In a clean place, one should be clean, established in clarity, studying what is true, speaking what is true, meditating on what is true, and sacrificing to what is true. Then one finds rest in true Brahman, which desires truth. The bonds of the results of action are cut. Without expectations, treating others as oneself, free from fear and desire, one reaches happiness that cannot be exhausted or measured and remains there. Having no desire is the highest thing one can draw from the highest treasure. A person filled with every desire, marked by determination, intention, and self-importance, is bound. Someone who is the opposite is free. Some say here: “Through the differences of nature, a quality becomes determination and binds the self. Liberation comes when the faults of determination are destroyed.” One sees through the mind and hears through the mind. Desire, intention, doubt, trust, distrust, firmness, lack of firmness, shame, understanding, and fear: all this is mind alone. Carried by streams of qualities, made dirty, unsteady, restless, plundered, longing, and distracted, one becomes self-important. Thinking “I am that; this is mine,” one binds oneself by oneself, like a bird in a net. So a person marked by determination, intention, and self-importance is bound; someone who is the opposite is free. Therefore remain without determination, intention, or self-importance. This marks liberation. This is the path to Brahman; this is the opening of the door. Through it one will go beyond this darkness. Here all desires are gathered

together. On this they quote: “When the five powers of knowing stand still together with the mind, and the understanding does not move, they call that the highest way.” After saying this, Śākāyanya was within the heart. The king bowed to him, carried out the proper service, and had done what needed to be done. He went along the wind’s northward course. There is no route here by a devious path. This is the path to Brahman: breaking through the sun’s door, they go out upward. On this they quote: “Countless are the rays of the one who stands like a lamp in the heart: white and black, brown and dark blue, yellow and pale red. One of them points upward. Breaking through the sun’s disk and passing beyond Brahmā’s world, people go by it to the highest way. The other hundred rays of this one that also point upward lead to the separate dwellings of the groups of gods. Its many-colored rays below, with their gentle light, bring a person back here, helpless, to experience the results of action.” Therefore that blessed sun is the cause of creation, heaven, and liberation. || ६.३० ||

He asks, “What is the nature of these senses as they operate? Who gives rise to them here, and who controls them?” The answer is: “Their nature is the Self. The Self gives rise to them. The water-born ones and those belonging to the sun are called rays. Through five rays it eats the objects of the senses.” Which Self? The one described as clean, purified, empty, peaceful, and so on, to be recognized through its own marks. This is a mark of the one without a mark: the warmth that has entered fire and the most beneficial essence of water, according to some. Others say it is speech, hearing, sight, mind, and life-breath. Others say understanding, firmness, memory, and insight are that. These belong to it as shoots belong to a seed, or as smoke, flame, and sparks belong to fire. On this they quote: “Just as sparks come from fire and rays from the sun, so life-breaths and the rest come forth here from it, again and again, in their proper order.” || ६.३१ ||

From this Self come all life-breaths, all worlds, all Vedas, all gods, and all beings. Its secret teaching is “the truth of truth.” Just as separate clouds of smoke come from a fire fed with damp wood, so the Rig Veda, Yajur Veda,

Sāma Veda, Atharva-Aṅgiras, history, ancient stories, learning, the Upanishads, verses, rules, supplementary explanations, and explanations are the breathing of this great being. All these beings belong to it alone. ॥ ६.३२॥

This fire, the year, has five bricks. Its bricks are spring, summer, the rainy season, autumn, and winter. With a head, two wings, a tail, and a back, this fire has the form of a person. This is Prajāpati's first piled altar. With its hands it lifts the sacrificer into the middle region and gives him to the wind. The wind is life-breath; life-breath is fire. Its bricks are the life-breath, the pervading breath, the downward breath, the balancing breath, and the upward breath. With a head, two wings, a back, and a tail, this fire has the form of a person. This middle region is Prajāpati's second piled altar. With its hands it lifts the sacrificer into heaven and gives him to Indra. That sun is Indra; it is this fire. Its bricks are the Rig, Yajur, Sāma, Atharva-Aṅgiras, and history and ancient stories. With a head, two wings, a tail, and a back, this fire has the form of a person. This heaven is Prajāpati's third piled altar. With its hands it makes an offering of the sacrificer to the knower of the Self. Just as the knower of the Self lifts him up and gives him to Brahman, there he becomes happy and delighted. ॥ ६.३३॥

Earth is the householder's fire; the middle region is the southern fire; heaven is the offering fire. From these come Pavamāna, Pāvaka, and Śuci. Through this, the sacrifice is revealed, for the fire in the belly is a combination of Pavamāna, Pāvaka, and Śuci. Therefore fire should receive sacrifice, be built up, be praised, and be meditated on. Taking the offering, the sacrificer wishes to meditate on the deity: "The golden-colored bird is established in the heart and in the sun: the diving bird, the swan, the bull of radiance. We sacrifice to him in this fire." He also considers the meaning of the prayer. "That desirable splendor of Savitṛ" is what he should meditate on. The meditator within the understanding follows the mind's place of peace here and places it in the Self alone. Here are these verses: १ Just as a fire without fuel dies down in its own source, so the mind, when its activities stop, dies down in its own source. २ For the mind quieted in its own source and seeking truth, the sense objects that delude it are false, following the power of action. ३ The mind itself is the cycle of rebirth. Work to purify it. Whatever a person's mind is, that is what the person

becomes. This is the lasting secret. ४ Through the mind's clarity one destroys action, both good and bad. With a clear self, established in the Self, one enjoys happiness that does not end. ५ If a creature's mind were as attached to Brahman as it is to the range of sense objects, who would not be freed from bondage? ६ The mind is said to be of two kinds, clean and unclean. It is unclean through contact with desire; it is clean when free from desire. ७ Make the mind completely still, neither sinking nor distracted. When it reaches the state of no mind, that is the highest place. ८ Restrain the mind in the heart until it has ceased. This is knowledge and liberation. Everything else is an expansion of books. ९ When the mind has been washed clean of dirt through absorption and placed in the Self, the happiness that comes cannot be described in speech. One grasps it personally through one's inner awareness. १० One cannot distinguish water in water, fire in fire, or space in space. Someone whose mind has entered within in this way is fully freed. ११ The mind alone is the cause of human bondage and liberation. Attachment to objects brings bondage; freedom from objects is held to bring liberation. For those who do not offer the fire sacrifice or build the fire altar, and who meditate on ignorance, it is therefore not fitting to contemplate space as Brahman's station. Therefore fire should receive sacrifice, be built up, be praised, and be meditated on. || ६.३४ ||

Honor to fire, dwelling on earth, remembering the world. Give a world to this sacrificer. Honor to wind, dwelling in the middle region, remembering the world. Give a world to this sacrificer. Honor to the sun, dwelling in heaven, remembering the world. Give a world to this sacrificer. Honor to Brahman, dwelling everywhere, remembering everything. Give everything to this sacrificer. The face of truth is covered by a golden bowl. Pūṣan, uncover it for Vishnu, whose law is truth. The person there in the sun is I. This is the true law: what makes the sun the sun. It is the bright, unmarked Person. What is in the middle of the sun is only a part of the radiance contained within space. This is also in the eye and in fire. This is Brahman; this is immortality; this is splendor; this is the true law. What is in the middle of the sun is only a part of the radiance contained within space: the immortal one, for which Soma and these life-breaths are shoots. This is Brahman; this is immortality; this is splendor; this is the true

law. What is in the middle of the sun is only a part of the radiance contained within space. There the sacrificial formula shines: “Om. The waters, light, essence, immortality, Brahman; earth, atmosphere, heaven. Om.” The clean swan has eight feet and three cords, is tiny and does not perish. With two conditions—blind and lit by radiance—the one who sees everything sees it. What is in the middle of the sun is only a part of the radiance contained within space. Having risen, it becomes a ray. This is awareness; this is the true law; this is the sacrificial formula; this is austerity; this is fire; this is wind; this is life-breath; this is water; this is the moon; this is brightness; this is immortality; this is the field of Brahman; this is the luminous ocean. In that alone the sacrificers dissolve, like salt. This is unity with Brahman. Here all desires are gathered together. On this they quote: “Like streams of rays, stirred by a fine wind, that one shines within the gods. Whoever knows this knows; he knows duality. From here he would have one dwelling and that very Self. They rise constantly like drops, like lightning or flames from clouds in the highest sky. Those flames of glory, because of what supports them, take the form of the matted locks of fire, whose path is black.” || ६.३५||

These are the two forms of Brahman’s light: one peaceful, the other flourishing. Space supports the peaceful form; food here supports the flourishing form. Therefore one should sacrifice within the altar with prayers, plants, clarified butter, meat, sacrificial cakes, cooked rice, and the rest. One should also offer the remaining food and drink in the mouth, thinking of the mouth as the offering fire, to increase radiance, win holy worlds, and reach immortality. On this they quote: “Someone who wants heaven should offer the fire sacrifice. One wins Yama’s kingdom through the Agniṣṭoma, Soma’s kingdom through the Uktha, the sun’s kingdom through the Ṣoḍaśin, one’s own sovereignty through the Atirātra, and Prajāpati’s kingdom through a rite ending after a thousand years.” Just as a lamp is kept going by the combination of wick, container, and oil, so these two, the Self and the bright one, are kept going by using what is inside the egg. || ६.३६||

Therefore one should worship this limitless radiance with Om. It is described in three ways: in fire, in the sun, and in life-breath. The channel called Abundant Food carries what is offered in fire to the sun. The essence that flows from it rains down the high chant. From this come these life-breaths, and from the life-breaths come creatures. On this they quote: “What is offered in fire is carried to the sun. The sun rains it down through its rays. Through that there is food; from food beings are born.” As it is said: “An offering properly placed in fire reaches the sun. From the sun comes rain; from rain comes food; from that come creatures.” || ६.३७ ||

Someone who offers the fire sacrifice breaks the net of greed. Having cut through confusion, without praising anger or dwelling on desire, one breaks through Brahman’s covering with its four nets and reaches the highest space. Having passed through the solar, lunar, fiery, and clear spheres, one is purified and sees the dwelling beyond everything, called Vishnu: inside clarity, unmoving, immortal, unfailing, constant, joined with true desire and complete knowledge, independent consciousness standing in its own greatness. On this they quote: “The moon is in the middle of the sun; fire is in the middle of the moon. Clarity is in the middle of radiance; the unfailing one is in the middle of clarity.” Meditating on what is the size of a thumb within the body’s span, smaller even than the small, one goes to the highest state. Here all desires are gathered together. On this they quote: “The size of a thumb, a span, or the body, like the heat and light of a lamp, in two or three forms: praised as Brahman, the great god has entered the worlds. Om. Honor to Brahman. Honor.” || ६.३८ || Here ends Prapathaka 6.

Prapathaka 7



Prapathaka 7. Fire, the Gāyatra meter, the threefold chant, the Rathantara chant, spring, the life-breath, the stars, and the Vasus rise in the east. They give heat, send rain, sing praise, and enter again. Through the opening inside, they see the one who cannot be thought of, who has no form, who is deep, whose nature is to experience the qualities, who never comes to an end, who rules yoga, who knows everything, who is a cloud, who cannot be measured, who has neither beginning nor end, who is splendid, unborn, intelligent, and impossible to describe; the maker of everything, the Self of everything, the eater of everything, the ruler of everything, the innermost of all. || ७.१ ||

Indra, the Triṣṭubh meter, the fifteenfold chant, the Bṛhat chant, summer, the pervading breath, Soma, and the Rudras rise in the south. They give heat, send rain, sing praise, and enter again. Through the opening inside, they see the one who has no beginning or end, who cannot be measured or confined, who is not put to work by another, who is independent, who has no identifying mark or form, whose power has no limit, who establishes things and gives light. || ७.२ ||

The Maruts, the Jagatī meter, the seventeenfold chant, the Vairūpa chant, the rainy season, the downward breath, Śukra, and the Adityas rise in the west. They give heat, send rain, sing praise, and enter again. Through the opening

inside, they see what is peaceful, silent, free from fear and sorrow, joyful, satisfied, firm, unmoving, immortal, unfailing, and constant, called Vishnu, the dwelling beyond everything. || 9.3 ||

The All-Gods, the Anuṣṭubh meter, the twenty-onefold chant, the Vairāja chant, autumn, the balancing breath, Varuṇa, and the Sādhyas rise in the north. They give heat, send rain, sing praise, and enter again. Through the opening inside, they see the one who is clean within, purified, empty, peaceful, without breath, without a self, and limitless. || 9.8 ||

Mitra and Varuṇa, the Paṅkti meter, the twenty-sevenfold and thirty-three-fold chants, the Śākvara and Raivata chants, early winter and late winter, the upward breath, the Aṅgirasas, and the moon rise above. They give heat, send rain, sing praise, and enter again. Through the opening inside, they see the guide called the sacred syllable, whose form is light, who is free from sleep, old age, death, and sorrow. || 9.9 ||

Saturn, Rāhu, Ketu, serpents, demons, yakshas, human beings, birds, śarabhas, elephants, and the rest rise below. They give heat, send rain, sing praise, and enter again. Through the opening inside, they see the wise one who holds things apart, who is inside everything, who does not perish, who is clean, purified, shining, patient, and peaceful. || 9.10 ||

This Self, very small within the heart, is like a fire that has been lit and takes every form. All this is its food. These creatures are woven into it. This is the Self free from evil, old age, death, sorrow, doubt, and bonds. Its intentions are true; its desires are true. It is the supreme ruler, the lord of beings, the keeper of beings. It is the bridge that keeps things apart. This Self is Iśāna, Śambhu, Bhava, Rudra, Prajāpati, the maker of everything, Hiranyagarbha, truth, life-breath, the swan, the teacher, Acyuta, Vishnu, and Nārāyaṇa. The one in fire, the one here in the heart, and the one there in the sun are one and the same. Honor to you, who take every form and are placed in the true sky. || 9.11 ||

Now, king, there are obstacles to knowledge. This is where the net of confusion begins: mixing what leads to heaven with what does not. Even in the enclosure mentioned earlier, they cling to the post below. There are people who are always amusing themselves, always away from home, always begging, or always

making their living by a craft. There are others who beg in towns, beg from people unfit for sacrifice, are pupils of Shudras, or are Shudras learned in the sacred writings. There are flatterers, people with matted hair, actors, soldiers, wandering ascetics, people who perform onstage, and fallen people in royal service, among others. There are those who put forward the interests of yakshas, demons, spirits, troops of spirits, ghouls, serpents, possessing powers, and the rest, saying, "We will pacify them." There are those who pointlessly wear red-dish robes and earrings or carry skulls. Others want to gain a place among people who follow the Vedas by empty arguments, examples, tricks, and magic. Do not live with them. They are thieves who have shown themselves openly; they do not lead to heaven. As it is said: "Led astray by the tricks of those who deny the Self, by false examples and arguments, people do not know what distinguishes the knowledge of the Vedas." || ७.८ ||

Bṛhaspati took the form of Śukra and created this ignorance to keep Indra safe and destroy the Asuras. Through it, people point to what is good and call it bad, and to what is bad and call it good. They say, "Let us meditate on a teaching that attacks the Vedas and other sacred writings." Therefore one should not devote oneself to it. Otherwise, it is like a barren woman: its only fruit is pleasure, as with someone who has abandoned proper conduct. One should not take it up. As it is said: "Far apart, opposed, and going in different directions are what are known as ignorance and knowledge. I think you, Nachiketas, want knowledge. Many desires have not made you greedy." "Whoever knows knowledge and ignorance together crosses death through ignorance and reaches immortality through knowledge." "Caught in ignorance, thinking themselves wise and learned, fools stumble and wander around, like blind people led by someone blind." || ७.९ ||

The gods and the Asuras, wanting the Self, went to Brahmā. They bowed to him and said, "Sir, we want the Self. Tell us about it." After thinking for a long time, he considered, "The Asuras have something different in mind as the Self." So something different was said to them. These fools live by it. They cling to things, wreck the ferry, and declare what is false. They see falsehood as if it were

truth, like a magic show. What is stated in the Vedas is therefore true. Those who know live by what the Vedas say. For this reason, a Brahmin should not study what is outside the Vedas. This is what it means. || ७.१०||

This is the nature of the sky contained within space: the supreme light described in three ways, as fire, the sun, and the life-breath. This is the nature of the sky contained within space: the syllable Om. Through this alone it wakes, rises, and breathes out. With continuous thought of Brahman as its support, here in this moving air and space it rises as along a branch and passes from trunk to trunk. It is like salt thrown into water, like heat in clarified butter, like the expansion of someone who meditates. On this they give these examples. Why is it called lightning? Because as soon as it is pronounced, it lights up the whole body. Therefore one should worship this limitless light with Om.

१ This person who is in the right eye
is Indra; his wife is in the left eye.

२ The two meet in the hollow inside the heart.

Their light is here in the mass of blood belonging to them both.

३ Their channel comes from the heart and extends to this eye.
It is one vein for the two, although it becomes two.

४ The mind strikes the fire in the body; that fire sets the air moving.
Moving in the chest, the air produces a deep sound.

५ Joined in the heart through the union of space and fire, it is smaller than the small; in the throat it consists of two atoms.

Know that at the tip of the tongue it consists of three atoms. When it comes out, they call it a speech sound.

६ The one who sees does not see death, disease, or suffering.

Seeing everything, one sees everything and reaches everything in every way.

७ The one in the eye, the one moving in dreams, the one asleep, and the one beyond the sleeping one:

these are its four divisions. The fourth is greater than the others.

८ Brahman moves with one foot in the three, and with three feet in what is above them.

They serve the experience of truth and untruth—the twofold condition of the great Self.

The twofold condition of the great Self. ॥ ७.११ ॥

Here ends Prapathaka 7.

Om. The peace prayer beginning “May they grow strong.”

Here the Maitrāyaṇīya Upanishad ends.