



Taittiriya Upanishad

UNKNOWN

Plain English Translation

MOUSEIA



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Plain English Translation

Translated by Michael Berardi

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THIS EDITION

Mouseia's complete machine-assisted Plain English translation, made independently and directly from the Sanskrit, covering all three vallīs and 31 anuvākas with the supplied invocations and colophon. Source-language review and one documented Sanskrit repair are recorded in the source registry.

TRANSLATOR

Michael Berardi

THE WORK

Written c. 1st millennium BCE · Upanishad

SOURCE

Original text from sa.wikisource.org.

GAPS AND UNCERTAINTIES

Sanskrit Wikisource transcription at pinned revisions 41419, 41421 and 41420; no printed edition identified by these pages; commentary excluded; one missing bliss-ladder transition restored from pinned Sanskrit witness 198002; source verse numbers moved to stanza starts for reader gutters; English renders extended chant syllables without the Sanskrit intonation digit 3.

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Shiksha Valli, Section 1

Om. Homage to the revered teachers. Hari. Om.

Prayer for peace.

Om. May Mitra be good to us, and Varuna be good to us. May Aryaman be good to us. May Indra and Brihaspati be good to us. May Vishnu, whose strides are wide, be good to us.

Homage to Brahman. Homage to you, Vayu. You yourself are Brahman, directly present. I will call you yourself Brahman, directly present. I will speak what is right.

I will speak the truth. May that protect me. May that protect the speaker.
Protect me. Protect the speaker.

Om. Peace, peace, peace.

Om. May Mitra be good to us, and Varuna be good to us. May Aryaman be good to us. May Indra and Brihaspati be good to us. May Vishnu, whose strides are wide, be good to us.

Homage to Brahman. Homage to you, Vayu. You yourself are Brahman, directly present. I will call you yourself Brahman, directly present. I will speak what is right.

I will speak the truth. May that protect me. May that protect the speaker.
Protect me. Protect the speaker.

Om. Peace, peace, peace.

Shiksha Valli, Section 2

- ¹ Om. We will explain phonetics: speech sounds and pitch, duration and force, evenness and continuity. This completes the lesson on phonetics.

Shiksha Valli, Section 3

- ¹ May fame be ours together. May the radiance of sacred learning be ours together. Now we will explain the hidden meaning of joining, in five areas: the worlds, the lights, learning, offspring, and the self. These are called the great joinings. First, the worlds: earth is the first element. Heaven is the second element. Space is the junction.
- ² Wind is the link. That is the joining in the worlds. Next, the lights: fire is the first element. The sun is the second element. Water is the junction. Lightning is the link. That is the joining in the lights. Next, learning: the teacher is the first element.
- ³ The resident student is the second element. Knowledge is the junction. Teaching is the link. That is the joining in learning. Next, offspring: the mother is the first element. The father is the second element. The child is the junction. Procreation is the link. That is the joining in offspring.
- ⁴ Next, the self: the lower jaw is the first element. The upper jaw is the second element. Speech is the junction. The tongue is the link. That is the joining in the self. These are the great joinings. Whoever knows these great joinings as explained here becomes united with children, livestock, the radiance of sacred learning, food to eat, and the heavenly world.

Shiksha Valli, Section 4

- ¹ The bull among the sacred meters, taking every form, arose from the immortal sacred meters. May that Indra fill me with understanding. God, may I be able to hold what is immortal.

May my body be fit. May my tongue be as sweet as honey. May I hear much with my ears. You are the covering of Brahman, hidden by understanding. Protect what I have heard.

- ² Bring me prosperity that always brings and increases my clothing, cattle, food, and drink, and makes them mine without delay.

Rich in wool and accompanied by livestock—svaha. May students committed to sacred study come to me—svaha. May students committed to sacred study come to me from far and wide—svaha. May students committed to sacred study come forward to me—svaha.

May students committed to sacred study practice self-control—svaha. May students committed to sacred study become calm—svaha.

- ³ May I have a good name among people—svaha. May I be better off than the wealthy—svaha. Bhaga, may I enter you—svaha. Bhaga, enter me—svaha.

In you, with your thousand branches, Bhaga, I wash myself clean—svaha. As water flows downhill, as the months pass into the year that wears away the days,

so may students committed to sacred study come to me from every direction, Creator—svaha. You are a refuge. Shine on me. Come to me.

Shiksha Valli, Section 5

- ¹ Bhur, Bhuvah, and Suvar are the three sacred utterances. Mahachamasya made known a fourth one: Mahah.

That is Brahman. That is the self. The other gods are its limbs. Bhur is this world. Bhuvah is the space between earth and heaven. Suvar is that world above.

- ² Mahah is the sun. Through the sun, all the worlds become great. Bhur is fire. Bhuvah is wind. Suvar is the sun.

Mahah is the moon. Through the moon, all the lights become great. Bhur is the Rig verses. Bhuvah is the Saman chants. Suvar is the Yajus formulas.

- ³ Mahah is Brahman. Through Brahman, all the Vedas become great. Bhur is the incoming breath. Bhuvah is the downward breath. Suvar is the breath spread through the body. Mahah is food.

Through food, all the vital breaths become great. These four each have four forms: four groups of four sacred utterances. Whoever knows them knows Brahman.

All the gods bring him offerings.

Shiksha Valli, Section 6

- ¹ There is a space inside the heart. In it is this person, made of mind, immortal and golden. Between the two sides of the palate, what hangs down like a nipple is Indra's passage. Where the hair parts, separating the two halves of the skull, he becomes established in fire through Bhur, and in wind through Bhuvah.
- ² Through Suvar, he becomes established in the sun; through Mahah, in Brahman. He gains self-rule. He gains mastery of the mind. He is master of speech and master of sight, master of hearing and master of understanding. Then he becomes this: Brahman, whose body is space, whose self is truth, whose delight is the vital breath, whose joy is mind, complete in peace, immortal. Meditate in this way, Prachinayogya.

Shiksha Valli, Section 7

- ¹ Earth, the space between earth and heaven, heaven, the directions, and the intermediate directions; fire, wind, the sun, the moon, and the stars; water, herbs, trees, space, and the self:

these concern the elements. Now, the individual self: the incoming breath, the breath spread through the body, the downward breath, the rising breath, and the balancing breath; sight, hearing, mind, speech, and touch; skin, flesh, sinews, bone, and marrow.

Having arranged these, the seer said, “All this comes in groups of five. Through a group of five, one fills a group of five.”

Shiksha Valli, Section 8

- ¹ Om is Brahman. Om is all this. Om is an expression of agreement. Indeed, they call out, “O, make it heard.” They sing the Saman chants with Om. They recite praises with “Om, shom.” The Adhvaryu priest gives his response with Om. The presiding priest gives permission with Om. One approves the fire offering with Om. A Brahmin about to recite says Om, thinking, “May I reach Brahman.” He does reach Brahman.

Shiksha Valli, Section 9

- ¹ Practice what is right, along with Vedic study and teaching. Practice truthfulness, along with Vedic study and teaching. Practice austerity, along with Vedic study and teaching. Practice self-control, along with Vedic study and teaching. Practice calmness, along with Vedic study and teaching. Maintain the sacred fires, along with Vedic study and teaching. Perform the fire offering, along with Vedic study and teaching. Welcome guests, along with Vedic study and teaching. Fulfill human responsibilities, along with Vedic study and teaching. Care for children, along with Vedic study and teaching. Have children, along with Vedic study and teaching. Continue the family line, along with Vedic study and

teaching.

“Truthfulness,” says Satyavachas Rathitara. “Austerity,” says Taponitya Paurushishti. “Vedic study and teaching alone,” says Naka Maudgalya. That is austerity. That is austerity.

Shiksha Valli, Section 10

- ¹ “I set the tree in motion. My fame is like a mountain’s summit. I am pure on high. Like the sun, I am truly immortal. I am radiant wealth. I have clear understanding and am bathed in immortality.” This is Trishanku’s declaration of Vedic knowledge.

Shiksha Valli, Section 11

- ¹ After teaching the Veda, the teacher instructs the resident student: “Speak the truth. Do what is right. Do not neglect Vedic study. Bring your teacher a gift of wealth that will please him, and do not break the family line.

Do not neglect truth. Do not neglect what is right. Do not neglect your well-being. Do not neglect prosperity. Do not neglect Vedic study and teaching.

Do not neglect your duties to the gods and ancestors.

- ² “Treat your mother as a god. Treat your father as a god. Treat your teacher as a god. Treat your guest as a god. Practice only blameless actions, not others. Follow only the good actions among our actions, not the others.

- ³ “Offer a seat to any Brahmins more distinguished than we are, so they can rest. Give with faith. Do not give without faith. Give generously. Give with modesty.

Give with fear. Give with understanding. Now, if you have any doubt about an action or about conduct,

⁴ “act as the Brahmins there would act in that situation—those who are thoughtful, capable, independent, not harsh, and committed to what is right. Now, concerning people who have been accused:

act toward them as the Brahmins there would act toward them—those who are thoughtful, capable, independent, not harsh, and embody what is right. This is the instruction.

This is the advice. This is the Veda’s hidden teaching. This is the command. This is how it must be put into practice. This is indeed how it must be put into practice.”

Shiksha Valli, Section 12

¹ May Mitra be good to us, and Varuna be good to us. May Aryaman be good to us. May Indra and Brihaspati be good to us. May Vishnu, whose strides are wide, be good to us.

Homage to Brahman. Homage to you, Vayu. You yourself are Brahman, directly present. I called you yourself Brahman, directly present. I spoke what is right. I spoke the truth.

That protected me. That protected the speaker. It protected me. It protected the speaker.

Om. Peace, peace, peace.

Brahmananda Valli, Section 1

Om. May it protect us both. May it nourish us both. May we work together with strength. May our study be full of light. May we not hate each other.

Om. Peace, peace, peace.

- ¹ Om. Whoever knows Brahman reaches the highest. This verse says it:
“Brahman is reality, knowledge, without limit. Whoever knows it, hidden
in the heart’s cave, in the highest space,
enjoys everything desired together with all-knowing Brahman.” From this very
self came space. From space came air.
From air came fire. From fire came water. From water came earth. From earth
came plants. From plants came food. From food came a person.
This person is made of the essence of food. This is his head. This is his right
wing. This is his left wing. This is his torso.
This is his tail, his support. There is also this verse about it.

Brahmananda Valli, Section 2

- ¹ All creatures living on earth are born from food. They live on food alone. In
the end they return to it.
Food is the oldest of beings. That is why it is called the medicine for all. Those
who worship food as Brahman obtain all food.
Food is the oldest of beings. That is why it is called the medicine for all. Beings
are born from food. Once born, they grow through food.
It is eaten, and it eats beings. That is why it is called food. Within this self made
of the essence of food is another self, made of life-breath.
The first is filled by this one. This one, too, has a human form. It takes a human
form to match the human form of the first. Life-breath itself is its head.
The spreading breath is its right wing. The downward breath is its left wing.
Space is its torso. Earth is its tail, its support. There is also this verse about
it.

Brahmananda Valli, Section 3

- ¹ The gods breathe by following life-breath, as do humans and animals. Life-breath is the life of beings. That is why it is called the life of all. They reach their full lifespan,

those who worship life-breath as Brahman. Life-breath is the life of beings. That is why it is called the life of all. This is the self within the body of the one before it. Within this self made of life-breath is another self, made of mind. The first is filled by this one. This one, too, has a human form.

It takes a human form to match the human form of the first. The Yajus formulas are its head. The Rig verses are its right wing. The Saman chants are its left wing. Instruction is its torso.

The hymns of Atharvan and Angiras are its tail, its support. There is also this verse about it.

Brahmananda Valli, Section 4

- ¹ Words turn back from it, along with the mind, unable to reach it. Whoever knows the bliss of Brahman is never afraid. This is the self within the body of the one before it. Within this self made of mind is another self, made of understanding. The first is filled by this one. This one, too, has a human form.

It takes a human form to match the human form of the first. Trust is its head.

Right order is its right wing. Truth is its left wing. Concentration is its torso.

Greatness is its tail, its support. There is also this verse about it.

Brahmananda Valli, Section 5

- ¹ Understanding carries out sacrifice. It carries out actions, too. All the gods worship understanding as Brahman, the oldest. If someone knows understanding as Brahman, and does not lose sight of it, they leave evil behind in the body and enjoy everything desired. This is the self within the body of the one before it. Within this self made of understanding is another self, made of bliss. The first is filled by this one. This one, too, has a human form. It takes a human form to match the human form of the first. Pleasure is its head. Joy is its right wing. Great joy is its left wing. Bliss is its torso. Brahman is its tail, its support. There is also this verse about it.

Brahmananda Valli, Section 6

- ¹ Anyone who knows Brahman as nonexistent becomes nonexistent. If someone knows that Brahman exists, people then know that person as existing. This is the self within the body of the one before it. Now come the further questions: Does anyone who does not know reach that world after death? Or does someone who knows reach that world after death?
- It wished, “May I become many. May I be born.” It practiced self-discipline. After practicing self-discipline, it created all this, everything that is here. After creating it, it entered that very creation. After entering it, it became the definite and the indefinite, what can be described and what cannot, what has a resting place and what does not, what has understanding and what does not, truth and falsehood. It became reality: everything that is here. That is what they call reality. There is also this verse about it.

Brahmananda Valli, Section 7

¹ In the beginning, this was nonexistent. From that, what exists was born. It made itself by itself. That is why it is called well made. What is well made

is the flavor. On gaining this flavor, a person becomes blissful. Who could breathe in or breathe out if this bliss were not here in space?

It is this that gives bliss. When a person finds a fearless foothold in what cannot be seen, has no body, cannot be described, and has no resting place, that person has reached fearlessness.

But when a person makes even a small gap within it, fear arises. That itself brings fear even to someone learned who does not understand. There is also this verse about it.

Brahmananda Valli, Section 8

¹ Out of fear of it, the wind blows. Out of fear, the sun rises. Out of fear of it, fire and Indra act, and death runs as the fifth. Now comes this examination of bliss.

Suppose there is a young man: a good young man who studies, with the highest hopes, the greatest steadiness, and the greatest strength. Suppose this whole earth, filled with wealth, belongs to him. That is one measure of human bliss.

A hundred measures of human bliss equal one measure of the bliss of human Gandharvas, and of someone learned in the Vedas and untouched by desire. A hundred measures of the bliss of human Gandharvas

equal one measure of the bliss of divine Gandharvas, and of someone learned in the Vedas and untouched by desire. A hundred measures of the bliss of divine Gandharvas equal one measure of the bliss of ancestors who live in long-lasting worlds,

and of someone learned in the Vedas and untouched by desire. A hundred measures of the bliss of ancestors who live in long-lasting worlds

equal one measure of the bliss of gods by birth, and of someone learned in the Vedas and untouched by desire. A hundred measures of the bliss of gods by birth

equal one measure of the bliss of gods through deeds, those who reach godhood through their deeds, and of someone learned in the Vedas and untouched by desire. A hundred measures of the bliss of gods through deeds

equal one measure of the bliss of the gods, and of someone learned in the Vedas and untouched by desire. A hundred measures of the bliss of the gods equal one measure of Indra's bliss, and of someone learned in the Vedas and untouched by desire.

A hundred measures of Indra's bliss equal one measure of Brihaspati's bliss, and of someone learned in the Vedas and untouched by desire. A hundred measures of Brihaspati's bliss equal one measure of Prajapati's bliss,

and of someone learned in the Vedas and untouched by desire. A hundred measures of Prajapati's bliss equal one measure of Brahma's bliss, and of someone learned in the Vedas and untouched by desire. What is here in a person

and what is there in the sun are one. Whoever knows this leaves this world and enters this self made of food, then enters this self made of life-breath,

then enters this self made of mind, then enters this self made of understanding, then enters this self made of bliss. There is also this verse about it.

Brahmananda Valli, Section 9

- ¹ Words turn back from it, along with the mind, unable to reach it. Whoever knows the bliss of Brahman is not afraid of anything. These questions do not torment that person: "Why did I not do what was good?"

Why did I do what was evil?” Someone who knows this is freed from these two. Yes, knowing this frees that person from both of them. This is the Upanishad.

Bhrigu Valli, Section 1

- ¹ Bhrigu, Varuna’s son, approached his father Varuna. “Sir, teach me about Brahman.” His father told him this: “Food, breath, sight, hearing, mind, and speech.”

He told him, “Find out what these beings are born from, what they live by once born, and what they enter when they depart. That is Brahman.”

He practiced disciplined effort. After practicing disciplined effort,

Bhrigu Valli, Section 2

- ¹ he understood that food is Brahman. These beings are indeed born from food. Once born, they live on food. When they depart, they enter food.

Having understood this, he approached his father Varuna again. “Sir, teach me about Brahman.” His father told him, “Seek to know Brahman through disciplined effort. Disciplined effort is Brahman.” He practiced disciplined effort.

After practicing disciplined effort,

Bhrigu Valli, Section 3

- ¹ he understood that breath is Brahman. These beings are indeed born from breath. Once born, they live by breath. When they depart, they enter breath.

Having understood this, he approached his father Varuna again. “Sir, teach me about Brahman.” His father told him, “Seek to know Brahman through disciplined effort. Disciplined effort is Brahman.”

He practiced disciplined effort. After practicing disciplined effort,

Bhrigu Valli, Section 4

- ¹ he understood that mind is Brahman. These beings are indeed born from mind. Once born, they live by mind. When they depart, they enter mind.

Having understood this, he approached his father Varuna again. “Sir, teach me about Brahman.” His father told him, “Seek to know Brahman through disciplined effort. Disciplined effort is Brahman.”

He practiced disciplined effort. After practicing disciplined effort,

Bhrigu Valli, Section 5

- ¹ he understood that understanding is Brahman. These beings are indeed born from understanding. Once born, they live by understanding. When they depart, they enter understanding.

Having understood this, he approached his father Varuna again. “Sir, teach me about Brahman.” His father told him, “Seek to know Brahman through disciplined effort. Disciplined effort is Brahman.”

He practiced disciplined effort. After practicing disciplined effort,

Bhrigu Valli, Section 6

- ¹ he understood that joy is Brahman. These beings are indeed born from joy. Once born, they live by joy. When they depart, they enter joy.

This is the knowledge Bhrigu received from Varuna. It rests in the highest space. Whoever knows this becomes firmly established. He has food and eats food. He becomes great through his children, livestock, and the radiance of sacred knowledge, and great in reputation.

Bhrigu Valli, Section 7

- ¹ Do not speak badly of food. That is the rule. Breath is food. The body is the eater of food. The body rests on breath, and breath rests in the body. So food rests on food.

Whoever knows how food rests on food becomes firmly established. He has food and eats food. He becomes great through his children, livestock, and the radiance of sacred knowledge, and great in reputation.

Bhrigu Valli, Section 8

- ¹ Do not reject food. That is the rule. Water is food. Light is the eater of food. Light rests in water, and water rests in light.

So food rests on food. Whoever knows how food rests on food becomes firmly established. He has food and eats food. He becomes great through his children, livestock, and the radiance of sacred knowledge, and great in reputation.

Bhrigu Valli, Section 9

- ¹ Produce plenty of food. That is the rule. Earth is food. Space is the eater of food. Space rests on earth, and earth rests in space.

So food rests on food. Whoever knows how food rests on food becomes firmly established. He has food and eats food. He becomes great through his children, livestock, and the radiance of sacred knowledge, and great in reputation.

Bhrigu Valli, Section 10

- ¹ Do not turn anyone away from lodging. That is the rule. So obtain plenty of food by whatever means you can. People say, “Food has been prepared for him.”

If the food prepared is of the highest quality, food of the highest quality is prepared for him. If it is of average quality, food of average quality is prepared for him. If it is of the lowest quality, food of the lowest quality is prepared for him.

- ² So it is for whoever knows this. Know it as security in speech, as gaining and keeping in breathing in and out, as action in the hands, as movement in the feet, and as release in the anus.

These are its names in human beings. Now for its divine names: as satisfaction in rain, as strength in lightning,

- ³ as reputation in livestock, as light in the stars, as procreation, immortality, and joy in the genitals, and as everything in space. Meditate on it as a foundation. You become firmly established.

Meditate on it as greatness. You become great. Meditate on it as mind. You become thoughtful.

- ⁴ Meditate on it as respect. Desirable things bow to you. Meditate on it as Brahman. You become endowed with Brahman. Meditate on it as Brahman's power of destruction.

Your hostile opponents die all around you, as do your hated rival relatives. The one here in a person and the one there in the sun are one and the same.

- ⁵ Whoever knows this, after leaving this world and reaching this self made of food, this self made of breath, and this self made of mind, after reaching this self made of understanding and this self made of joy, travels through these worlds, eating whatever he wants and taking whatever form he wants.

He sits singing this chant: "Ha-a-u! Ha-a-u! Ha-a-u!"

- ⁶ "I am food, I am food, I am food. I am the eater of food, I am the eater of food, I am the eater of food. I make the verse, I make the verse, I make the verse. I am the firstborn of truth.

I was born before the gods. I am the center of immortality. Whoever gives me has truly protected me. I am food; I eat the one who eats food. I have overcome the whole world.

I am golden light." So it is for whoever knows this. This is the Upanishad. Om. May he protect us both. May he nourish us both. May we work together with strength. May our study be brilliant. May we not hate each other.

Om. Peace, peace, peace.

Here ends the Taittiriya Upanishad.