

## **Brahma Upanishad**

*Om! May He protect us both together; may He nourish us both together;*

*May we work conjointly with great energy,*

*May our study be vigorous and effective;*

*May we not mutually dispute (or may we not hate any).*

*Om! Let there be Peace in me!*

*Let there be Peace in my environment!*

*Let there be Peace in the forces that act on me!*

1. Om ! Shaunaka, householder of fame, once asked Bhagavan Pippalada of Angira's family: In this body, the divine city of Brahman, installed, how do they create ? Whose glory does this constitute ? Who is he who became all this glory ?

2. Unto him (Shaunaka) he (Pippalada) imparted the supreme Wisdom of Brahman: That is Prana, the Atman. He constitutes the glory of the Atman, the life of the Devas. He represents both the life and the death of the Devas. That Brahman who shines within the divine Brahmapura (or body) as the faultless One, devoid of manifested effects, self-effulgent, all-pervading, He (it is who) controls (the Jiva), like a spider controlling the king of bees. Just as spiders by means of one thread project and withdraw the web, so also the Prana, (who) retires drawing back his creation. Prana belongs to the Nadis or subtle nerve-chords as their Devata or indwelling deity. One in dreamless sleep goes through that state to one's own Abode, like a falcon and the sky – just as a falcon goes (to its nest) borne on the sky. He states: -- Just as this Devadatta (in dreamless sleep) runs not away even when struck with a stick, even so he does not also attach himself to good or evil consequences of the life's ordained activities; just as a child enjoys itself (spontaneously) without motive or desiring fruit, even so this Devadatta (the subject of dreamless sleep) enjoys happiness in that state. He knows being the Light Supreme. Desiring Light he enjoys the Light. So also he returns by the same way to the dream-state, like a leech: just as a leech carries itself on to the other points in front – (first) fixing upon the next point. And that state which he does not give up for a next one is called the waking state. (He carries all these states within himself) just as a (Vedic) deity bears the eight sacrificial cups simultaneously. It is from Him that the source of the Vedas and the Devas hang like breasts. In this waking state particularly good and evil obtain for the shining being (i.e. man's Self) as ordained. This being or Self is fully self-extended (into world-forms), he is the indwelling controller of things and beings, he is the Bird, the Crab, the Lotus, he is the Purusha, the Prana, the destroyer, the cause and the effect, the Brahman and the Atman, he is the Devata making everything known. Whoever knows all this attains to the transcendent Brahman, the underlying support, the subjective principle.

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3. Now this Purusha has four seats, the navel, the heart, the throat, and the head. In these shines forth the Brahman with four aspects: the state of wakefulness, of dream, of dreamless sleep, and the fourth or transcendental state. In the wakeful state, He is Brahma; in the dreaming state, He is Vishnu; in dreamless sleep He is Rudra; and the fourth state is the Supreme Indestructible One; and He again is the Sun, the Vishnu, the Ishwara, He is the Purusha, He the Prana, He the Jive or the animate being, He the Fire, The Ishwara, and the Resplendent; (yea) that Brahman which is transcendent shines within all these ! In Itself, It is devoid of mind, of ears, of hands and feet, of light. There neither are the worlds existing nor non-existing, neither are the Vedas or the Devas or the sacrifices existing nor non-existing, neither is the mother or father or daughter-in-law existing nor non-existing, neither is Chandala's son or Pulkasa's son existing nor non-existing, neither is the mendicant existing nor non-existing, so neither all the creatures or the ascetics; and thus only the One Highest Brahman shines there. Within the recess of the heart is that Akasa of consciousness – that with many openings, the aim of knowledge, within the space of the heart – in which all this (universe outside) evolves and moves about, in which all this is warped and woofed (as it were). (Who knows this), knows fully all creation. There the Devas, the Rishis, the Pitris have no control, for being fully awakened, one becomes the knower of all truth.

4. In the heart the Devas live, in the heart the Pranas are installed, in the heart exist the supreme Prana and Light as also the immanent Cause with threefold constituents and the Mahat principle.

5. It exists within this heart, that is, in the consciousness. “Put on the sacrificial thread which is supremely sacred, which became manifest of yore with Prajapati (the first created Being) Himself, which embodies longevity, eminence and purity, and may it be strength and puissance to you !”

6. The enlightened one should discard the external thread putting it off with the sacred tuft of hair on the head; the Supreme Brahman as the all-pervading one is the thread, and he should put this on.

7. The Sutra (or thread) is so called because of its having pierced through and started (the process of becoming). This Sutra verily constitutes the Supreme State. By whom this Sutra is known, he is the Vipra (sage), he has reached beyond the Vedas.

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**8.** By It all this (universe) is transfixed, as a collection of gems is strung together on a thread. The Yogi who is the knower of all Yogas and the seer of truth should put on this thread.

**9.** Established in the state of highest Yoga, the wise one should put off the external thread. One who is really self-conscious must put on the thread constituted by awareness of Brahman.

**10.** On account of wearing this Sutra or thread, they can neither become contaminated nor unclean, those (namely) who have this thread existing within them – those, with this sacrificial thread of knowledge.

**11.** They, among men, (really) know the Sutra, they (really) wear the sacrificial thread (on themselves), who are devoted to Jnana (the highest knowledge), who have this Jnana for their sacred hair-tuft, this Jnana for their sacred thread.

**12.** For them Jnana is the greatest purifier – Jnana, that is the best as such. Those who have this Jnana for their tufted hair are as non-different from it as is fire from its flame. This wise one is (really) said to be a Shikhi (or wearer of the tufted hair), while others are mere growers of hair (on the head).

**13.** But those belonging to the three castes (Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas) who have the right of performing Vedic works have to put on this (i.e. the common) sacred thread, as surely this thread is ordained to be part of such works.

**14.** One who has the Jnana for his tufted hair, and the same for his sacred thread, has everything about him characterised by Brahmanahood – so know the knowers of the Vedas !

**15.** This sacred thread (of Yajna, i.e. of the all-pervading Reality) is, again, the purification (itself) and that which is the end-all (of Vedic works); and the wearer of this thread is the wise one – is Yajna himself as well as the knower of Yajna.

**16.** The One Lord (self-effulgent) in all beings remaining hidden, all-pervading and the Self of all beings, controlling and watching over all works (good or bad), living in all creatures and the Witness (i.e. neither the doer of any acts nor the enjoyer), the Supreme Intelligence, the One without a second, having no attributes.

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**17.** The one Intelligent (active) Being among the many inactive, He who makes the many from what is one – the wise men who find out this Self, theirs is the eternal peace, not of others.

**18.** Having made oneself the Arani, and the Pranava the upper Arani and rubbing them together through the practice of meditation, see the Lord in His hidden reality.

**19.** As in the oil in the sesamum seed, the butter in the curd, water in the flowing waves, and fire in the Shami wood, so is the Atman in one's self to be discovered by one who searches for It through truth and austere practice.

**20.** As the spider weaves out the web and again withdraws it, so the Jiva comes out to and goes back again to the wakeful and dreaming states respectively.

**21.** The heart (i.e. the inner chamber of heart) resembles the calyx of a lotus, full of cavities and also with its face turned downwards. Know that to be the great habitat of the whole universe.

**22.** Know the wakeful state to have for its centre the eyes; the dreaming state should be assigned to the throat; the state of dreamless sleep is in the heart; and the transcendental state is in the crown of the head.

**23.** From the fact of an individual holding his self by means of Prajna or spiritual understanding in the Supreme Self, we have what is called Sandhya and Dhyana, as also the worshipping associated with Sandhya.

**24.** The Sandhya by meditation is devoid of any offering of liquids and so also of any exertion of body and speech; it is the unifying principle for all creatures, and this is really the Sandhya for Ekadandis.

**26.** From which without reaching It, the speech falls back with the mind, that is the transcendental Bliss of this embodied being, knowing which the wise one is released (from all bondage).

**“Om Sri Lakshmi Narashimhan Nahama”**

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**26.** (And this Bliss is verily) the Self which pervades the whole universe, as the butter diffused within the milk.

This is the Brahmopanishad, or the supreme wisdom of Brahman, in the form of a unity of the Atman of all, founded on the spiritual discipline (Tapas) which is (nothing but) the Vidya or science of the Atman.

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*May we work conjointly with great energy,*

*May our study be vigorous and effective;*

*May we not mutually dispute (or may we not hate any).*

*Om! Let there be Peace in me!*

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***Here ends the Brahmopanishad belonging to the Krishna-Yajur-Veda.***

*Reference*

Swami Madhavananda. Advaita Ashram, Kolkatta. “Brahma Upanishad.”