



CHAPTER II

## THE UPANIṢADS

THE Upaniṣads are the concluding portions of the Vedas and the basis for the Vedānta philosophy, “a system in which human speculation seems to have reached its very acme,” according to Max Müller. The Upaniṣads have dominated Indian philosophy, religion, and life for nearly three thousand years. Though remote in time from us, the Upaniṣads are not remote in thought. The ideal which haunted the thinkers of the Upaniṣads—the ideal of man’s ultimate beatitude, the perfection of knowledge, the vision of the real in which the religious hunger of the mystic for direct vision and the philosopher’s ceaseless quest for truth are both satisfied—is still our ideal.

The word “Upaniṣad” is derived from *upa*, near, *ni*, down, and *sad*, to sit. Groups of pupils sat near the teacher to learn from him the truth by which ignorance is destroyed.

There are over 200 Upaniṣads, although the traditional number is 108. Of these, the principal Upaniṣads are ten: *Īśa*, *Kena*, *Kaṭha*, *Praśna*, *Mundaka*, *Māṇḍūkya*, *Taittiriya*, *Aitareya*, *Chāndogya*, and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*. Śaṅkara, the great Vedāntic philosopher, wrote commentaries on eleven of the Upaniṣads, these ten and the *Śvetāśvatara*. He also referred to the *Kauśītaki* and *Mahānārāyaṇa*. These, together with the *Maitri*, constitute the fourteen principal Upaniṣads.

The dates of the Upaniṣads are difficult to determine. The ancient prose Upaniṣads, *Aitareya*, *Kauśītaki*, *Chāndogya*, *Kena*, *Taittiriya*, and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, as well as the *Īśa* and *Kaṭha*, belong to the eighth and seventh centuries B.C. They are definitely pre-Buddhistic.

We do not know the names of the authors of the Upaniṣads. Some of the chief doctrines of the Upaniṣads are associated with the names of renowned sages such as Aruṇi, Yājñavalkya, Bālāki, Śvetaketu, and Śāṇḍilya. They were perhaps the early exponents of the doctrines attributed to them.

The Upaniṣads belong to *śruti* or revealed literature, and are the utterances of sages who spoke out of the fullness of their illumined experience. They are vehicles more of spiritual illumination than of systematic reflection. Their aim is practical rather than speculative. They give us knowledge as a means to spiritual freedom. Out of the wealth of suggestions and speculations contained in the Upaniṣads, various later thinkers chose elements for the construction of their own systems, not infrequently by straining the texts.

## THE VEDIC PERIOD

Though a logical and coherent system of metaphysics is not to be found in the *Upaniṣads*, there are a few fundamental doctrines which stand out as the central teachings of the early ones. The reflective tendency manifest in some of the philosophical hymns of the *Rg Veda* becomes more pronounced in the *Upaniṣads*. Hymns to gods and goddesses are replaced by a search for the reality underlying the flux of things. "What is that which, being known, everything else becomes known?"<sup>1</sup> There is one God of whom all the Vedic gods are manifestations. "For fear of whom fire burns, for fear of whom the sun shines, for fear of whom the winds, clouds, and death perform their offices."<sup>2</sup>

The real which is at the heart of the universe is reflected in the infinite depths of the self. *Brahman* (the ultimate as discovered objectively) is *Ātman* (the ultimate as discovered introspectively). *Tat tvam asi* (That art thou). Truth is within us. "When we realize the universal Self in us, when and what may anybody fear or worship?"

The Supreme in its inner being as the one self-subsistent reality cannot be defined by logical categories or linguistic symbols. It is the incomprehensible *nirguna* (qualityless) *Brahman*, the pure Absolute. It is envisaged as *saguṇa* (with qualities) *Brahman* or *Iśvara*, a personal god, when It is viewed as the constitutive reality of the many or the cause of the world, as the source, ground, and dwelling-place of selves. The *Upaniṣads* thus set forth the distinction between *Brahman* in itself and *Brahman* in the universe, the transcendent beyond manifestation and the transcendent in manifestation, the Self pure and essential and the Self in the individual selves.

The *Upaniṣads* subordinate Vedic ceremonialism and even caste duties to the supreme good of self-realization. They lay great stress on the distinction between the ignorant, narrow, selfish way which leads to transitory satisfaction and the way of wisdom which leads to eternal life. Though here and there we find passages supporting sacrificial observances, the main tendency of the *Upaniṣads* is against them. While the sacrifice is the abandonment of one's ego, prayer is the exploration of reality by entering the Beyond that is within, by an ascension of consciousness. The *Upaniṣads* speak to us of the way in which the individual self gets at the ultimate reality by an inward journey, an inner ascent. They give us the stages of the ascent in some detail.

This inner ascent requires adequate moral preparation, "The Self is not to be attained by one without fortitude, not through slackness nor without distinctive marks of discipline."<sup>3</sup> To see the Self one must become "calm, controlled, quiet, patiently enduring, and contented."<sup>4</sup>

The goal is not a heavenly state of bliss or rebirth in a better world. Negatively, it is freedom from the objective cosmic law of *karma*; positively, it is identity with the Supreme. Until we are released from the law of *karma* and reach *mokṣa* or deliverance, we will be in *samsāra* or the time process.

<sup>1</sup> *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* I.i.3.

<sup>2</sup> *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* III.ii.4.

<sup>3</sup> *Taittiriya Upaniṣad* II.vii.

<sup>4</sup> *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* IV.iv.23.

## THE UPANIṢADS

As in the selections quoted from the *Rg Veda*, the purpose of passages chosen from the Upaniṣads is to emphasize the basic principles and teachings rather than the literary style. Passages from all of the most important Upaniṣads are included in order to present the rich variety of doctrines and the numerous approaches to the basic metaphysical view. To quote any of the longer Upaniṣads completely would involve much repetition and has been deemed inadvisable and unnecessary. Only two short—but important—Upaniṣads, the *Iśa* and the *Māṇḍūkya*, are included in their entirety. The sequence in which the Upaniṣads are listed conforms, not to the chronological order, but to the traditional arrangement employed in Upaniṣadic studies in India.

The selections are taken from R. E. Hume, *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads* (London: Oxford University Press, 2nd ed. rev., 1931).

Attention is called to the questionable and misleading translation of certain basic terms in the text used. To avoid confusion and possible misinterpretation the ultimate reality should be designated generally as *Brahman*, not *Brahma*, and as It, or That, not He. Also, the word “*Ātman*” or “*ātman*” (the former referring to the ultimate principle, the latter to the individual principle in man) should, for clarity, be translated as “Self” or “self,” not “Soul” or “soul,” respectively. These changes have been made in the selections included here. *Brahma*, though technically correct, has been changed to *Brahman* and Soul or soul to Self or self, respectively. *Puruṣa*, person, may be referred to by the personal pronoun, of course.

### 1. IŚA UPANIṢAD

This, the smallest of all the Upaniṣads, consisting of only eighteen short verses, speaks of many important topics, including the claims of the path of knowledge and the path of action, the paradoxical nature of the *Ātman*, and the nature of the nonattached sage. Most important, however, is the doctrine that neither knowledge of the supernatural nor knowledge of the natural alone can be sufficient for true wisdom. By implication, then, this Upaniṣad tends to deny the doctrine of the unreality of the empirical world which is emphasized in some phases of later Indian philosophy.

The Upaniṣad gets its name—the full and correct form of which is *Isavāsyam*—from the first word of the text.

*The paradoxical, transcendent, yet immanent, unity underlying  
the diversity of the world<sup>1</sup>*

1. By the Lord (*Iśā*) enveloped must this all be—  
Whatever moving thing there is in the moving world.  
With this renounced, thou mayest enjoy.  
Covet not the wealth of anyone at all.

<sup>1</sup> Section headings conform for the most part to those in Hume, but some have been revised and, in some instances, completely new headings have been added or substituted.

THE VEDIC PERIOD

2. Even while doing deeds here,  
One may desire to live a hundred years.  
Thus on thee—not otherwise than this is it—  
The deed adheres not on the man.
3. Devilish are those worlds called,  
With blind darkness covered o'er!  
Unto them, on descending, go  
Whatever folk are slayers of the Self.
4. Unmoving, the One is swifter than the mind.  
The sense-powers reached not It, speeding on before.  
Past others running, This goes standing.  
In It Mātariśvan places action.
5. It moves. It moves not.  
It is far, and It is near.  
It is within all this,  
And It is outside of all this.
6. Now, he who on all beings  
Looks as just in the Self (*Ātman*),  
And on the Self as in all beings—  
He does not shrink away from Him.
7. In whom all beings  
Have become just the Self of the discerner—  
Then what delusion, what sorrow is there,  
Of him who perceives the unity!
8. He has environed. The bright, the bodiless, the scatheless,  
The sinewless, the pure, unpierced by evil!  
Wise, intelligent, encompassing, self-existent,  
Appropriately he distributed objects through the eternal years.
9. Into blind darkness enter they  
That worship ignorance;  
Into darkness greater than that, as it were, they  
That delight in knowledge.<sup>1</sup>
10. Other, indeed, they say, than knowledge!  
Other, they say, than non-knowledge!  
—Thus we have heard from the wise  
Who to us have explained It.
11. Knowledge and non-knowledge—  
He who this pair conjointly knows,

<sup>1</sup> The sophistry of the learned is a greater danger than the ignorance of the unlearned.

THE UPANIṢDAS

- With non-knowledge passing over death,  
With knowledge wins the immortal.
12. Into blind darkness enter they  
Who worship non-becoming;  
Into darkness greater than that, as it were, they  
Who delight in becoming.
13. Other, indeed—they say—than origin!  
Other—they say—than non-origin!  
—Thus have we heard from the wise  
Who to us have explained It.
14. Becoming and destruction—  
He who this pair conjointly knows,  
With destruction passing over death,  
With becoming wins the immortal.
15. With a golden vessel  
The Real's face is covered o'er.  
That do thou, O Pūṣan, uncover  
For one whose law is the Real to see.
16. O Nourisher, the sole Seer, O Controller, O Sun, offspring of  
Prajāpati, spread forth thy rays! Gather thy brilliance! What  
is thy fairest form—that of thee I see. He who is yonder,  
yonder Person—I myself am he!
17. [My] breath to the immortal wind! This body then ends in  
ashes! *Om*!  
O Purpose, remember! The deed remember!  
O Purpose, remember! The deed remember!
18. O Agni, by a goodly path to prosperity lead us,  
Thou god who knowest all the ways!  
Keep far from us crooked-going sin!  
Most ample expression of adoration to thee would we render.

2. KENA UPANIṢAD

As the name indicates, this Upaniṣad asks, “By whom?”—that is, who is the real power behind the functions of the universe, external in nature and internal in man. In reply the Upaniṣad gives an account of a single unitary reality, the *Ātman*, as the inspirer of the functions of both man and the universe, of sense-functions in man and the functions of the elements in the external world. While knowledge of the unqualified Absolute alone can result in emancipation, knowledge of the Absolute as God prepares the way for such knowledge.

### THE VEDIC PERIOD

The Upaniṣad is famous also for its saying, “It is not understood by those who [say they] understand It. It is understood by those who [say they] understand It not.” This statement is intended to indicate the paradoxical nature of the inscrutability of the Absolute, the *Brahman* or *Ātman*.

[Question:] *The real agent in the individual?*

1. By whom impelled soars forth the mind projected?  
By whom enjoined goes forth the earliest breathing?  
By whom impelled this speech do people utter?  
The eye, the ear—what god, pray, them enjoineth?

[Answer:] *The all-conditioning, yet inscrutable agent, Brahman*

2. That which is the hearing of the ear, the thought of the mind,  
The voice of speech, as also the breathing of the breath,  
And the sight of the eye! Past these escaping, the wise,  
On departing from this world, become immortal.
3. There the eyes goes not;  
Speech goes not, nor the mind.  
We know not, we understand not  
How one would teach It.  
Other, indeed, is It than the known,  
And moreover above the unknown.  
—Thus have we heard of the ancients  
Who to us have explained It. (i.1-3)

*The paradox of Its inscrutability*

3. [Teacher:]  
It is conceived of by him by whom It is not conceived of.  
He by whom It is conceived of, knows It not.  
It is not understood by those who [say they] understand It.  
It is understood by those who [say they] understand It not.
4. When known by an awakening, It is conceived of;... (ii.3-4)

### 3. KATHA UPANIṢAD

The *Katha* gets its name from a school of the *Black Yajur Veda*. It is perhaps the most philosophical of the Upaniṣads. Among its important features are: the dialogue between Naciketas and Yama (the god of the world of departed spirits) on the question of the immortality of the self,

in which Naciketas chooses knowledge above all worldly blessings; the theory of the superiority of the good (*sreyas*) over the pleasant (*preyas*); the view that the *Ātman* cannot be known by the senses, by reason, or by much learning, but only by intuitive insight or direct realization; and the doctrine of the body as the chariot of the self—a reminder of a similar figure used by Plato.

*The story of Naciketas: knowledge preferable to the greatest earthly pleasures*

1. Now verily, with zeal did Vājaśravasa give his whole possession [as a religious gift].  
He had a son, Naciketas by name.
2. Into him, boy as he was, while the sacrificial gifts were being led up, faith entered....
4. Then he said to his father: "Papa, to whom will you give me?"—  
a second time—a third time.  
To him then he said: "To Death I give you!"<sup>1</sup>

[Here follows a conversation between Death (Yama) and Naciketas. Death, just returned from a three days' absence and finding that Naciketas has not received the hospitality which is due a *brāhmaṇī*, says, "Therefore in return choose three boons!" His first wish is that he might return to his father on earth; his second is for an understanding of the Naciketas sacrificial fire that leads to heaven. These are granted. The account of the third and most important wish follows in part:]

[Naciketas:]

20. This doubt that there is in regard to a man deceased:  
"He exists," say some; "He exists not," say others—  
This would I know, instructed by thee!  
Of the boons this is boon the third.

[Death:]

21. Even the gods had doubt as to this of yore!  
For truly, it is not easily to be understood. Subtile is this matter.  
Another boon, O Naciketas, choose!  
Press me not! Give up this one for me!

<sup>1</sup> Opinions and interpretations of this incident and the motivations involved vary. No attempt is made here to take a position on this debatable question.

[Naciketas:]

22. Even the gods had doubt, indeed, as to this,  
And thou, O Death, sayest that it is not easily to be understood.  
And another declarer of it the like of thee is not to be obtained.  
No other boon the equal of it is there at all.

[Death:]

23. Choose centenarian sons and grandsons,  
Many cattle, elephants, gold, and horses.  
Choose a great abode of earth.  
And thyself live as many autumns as thou desirest.
24. This, if thou thinkest as equal boon,  
Choose—wealth and long life!  
A great one on earth, O Naciketas, be thou.  
The enjoyer of thy desires I make thee.
25. Whate'er desires are hard to get in the mortal world—  
For all desires at pleasure make request.  
These lovely maidens with chariots, with lyres—  
Such [maidens], indeed, are not obtainable by men—  
By these, from me bestowed, be waited on!  
O Naciketas, question me not regarding dying!

[Naciketas:]

26. Ephemeral things! That which is a mortal's, O End-maker,  
Even the vigor of all the powers, they wear away.  
Even a whole life is slight indeed.  
Thine be the vehicles! Thine be the dance and song!
27. Not with wealth is a man to be satisfied.  
Shall we take wealth, if we have seen thee?  
Shall we live so long as thou shalt rule?  
—This, in truth, is the boon to be chosen by me.
28. When one has come into the presence of undecaying immortals,  
What decaying mortal, here below, that understands,  
That meditates upon the pleasures of beauty and delight,  
Would delight in a life over-long?
29. This thing whereon they doubt, O Death:  
What there is in the great passing-on—tell us that!  
This boon, that has entered into the hidden—  
No other than that does Naciketas choose. (I.1-2, 4, 20-29)

THE UPANIṢADS

## *The failure of pleasure and of ignorance; the wisdom of the better knowledge*

### [Death:]

1. The better (*sreyas*) is one thing, and the pleasanter (*preyas*) quite another.  
Both these, of different aim, bind a person.  
Of these two, well it is for him who takes the better;  
He fails of his aim who chooses the pleasanter.
  2. Both the better and the pleasanter come to a man.  
Going all around the two, the wise man discriminates.  
The wise man chooses the better, indeed, rather than the  
pleasanter.  
The stupid man, from getting-and-keeping, chooses the  
pleasanter.
  3. Thou indeed, upon the pleasant and pleasantly appearing  
desires  
Meditating, has let them go, O Naciketas.  
Thou art not one who has taken that garland of wealth  
In which many men sink down.
  4. Widely opposite and asunder are these two:  
Ignorance and what is known as “knowledge.”  
I think Naciketas desirous of obtaining knowledge!  
Many desires rend thee not.
  5. Those abiding in the midst of ignorance,  
Self-wise, thinking themselves learned,  
Running hither and thither, go around deluded,  
Like blind men led by one who is himself blind.

## *The eternal indestructible Self*

18. The wise one [i.e., the *Atman*, the Self] is not born, nor dies.  
This one has not come from anywhere, has not become anyone.  
Unborn, constant, eternal, primeval, this one  
Is not slain when the body is slain.
  19. If the slayer think to slay,  
If the slain think himself slain,  
Both these understand not.  
This one slays not, nor is slain.
  20. More minute than the minute, greater than the great,  
Is the Self that is set in the heart of a creature here.

*THE VEDIC PERIOD*

One who is without the active will beholds Him, and becomes  
freed from sorrow—

When through the grace of the Creator he beholds the greatness  
of the Self.

22. Him who is the bodiless among bodies,  
Stable among the unstable,  
The great, all-pervading Self—  
On recognizing Him, the wise man sorrows not.
23. This Self is not to be obtained by instruction,  
Nor by intellect, nor by much learning.  
He is to be obtained only by the one whom he chooses;  
To such a one that Self reveals his own person.
24. Not he who has not ceased from bad conduct,  
Not he who is not tranquil, not he who is not composed,  
Not he who is not of peaceful mind  
Can obtain Him by intelligence (*prajñā*).
25. He for whom the priesthood and the nobility  
Both are as food,  
And death is as a sauce—  
Who really knows where He is?

(ii.18–20, 22–5)

*The universal and the individual self*

3. Know thou the self (*ātman*) as riding in a chariot,  
The body as the chariot.  
Know thou the intellect (*buddhi*) as the chariot-driver,  
And the mind as the reins.
4. The senses, they say, are the horses;  
The objects of sense, what they range over.  
The self combined with senses and mind  
Wise men call “the enjoyer.”
7. He, however, who has not understanding,  
Who is unmindful and ever impure,  
Reaches not the goal,  
But goes on to transmigration [rebirth].
8. He, however, who has understanding,  
Who is mindful and ever pure,  
Reaches the goal  
From which he is born no more....
10. Higher than the senses are the objects of sense.  
Higher than the objects of sense is the mind;

THE UPANIṢADS

- And higher than the mind is the intellect (*buddhi*).  
Higher than the intellect is the Great Self (*Ātman*).  
11. Higher than the Great is the Unmanifest (*avyakta*).  
Higher than the Unmanifest is the Person.  
Higher than the Person there is nothing at all.  
That is the goal. That is the highest course.  
12. Though He is hidden in all things,  
That Self shines not forth.  
But He is seen by subtle seers  
With superior, subtle intellect.  
13. An intelligent man should suppress his speech and his mind.  
The latter he should suppress in the Understanding-Self (*jñāna ātman*).  
The understanding he should suppress in the Great Self.  
That he should suppress in the Tranquil Self....  
14. Arise ye! Awake ye!  
Obtain your boons and understand them!  
A sharpened edge of a razor, hard to traverse,  
A difficult path is this—poets declare!  
15. What is soundless, touchless, formless, imperishable,  
Likewise tasteless, constant, odorless,  
Without beginning, without end, higher than the great, stable—  
By discerning That, one is liberated from the mouth of death.
- (iii.3–4, 7–8, 10–15)

*The immortal Self not to be sought by outward knowledge*

1. The Self-existent pierced the openings [of the senses] outward;  
Therefore one looks outward, not within himself.  
A certain wise man, while seeking immortality,  
Introspectively beheld the Self face to face.
2. The childish go after outward pleasures;  
They walk into the net of widespread death.  
But the wise, knowing immortality,  
Seek not the stable among things which are unstable here.
3. That by which [one discerns] form, taste, smell,  
Sound, and mutual touches—  
It is with That indeed that one discerns.  
What is there left over here!  
This, verily, is That!

THE VEDIC PERIOD

4. By recognizing as the great pervading Self  
That whereby one perceives both  
The sleeping state and the waking state,  
The wise man sorrows not.
  10. Whatever is here, that is there.  
What is there, that again is here.  
He obtains death after death  
Who seems to see a difference here.
  11. By the mind, indeed, is this [realization] to be attained:—  
There is no difference here at all!  
He goes from death to death  
Who seems to see a difference here. (iv.1-4, 10-11)

*One's real person (self), the same as the world-ground*

*The world-tree rooted in Brahman; [Ways to Brahman]*

1. Its root is above, its branches below—  
This eternal fig-tree!  
That (root) indeed is the Pure. That is *Brahman*.  
That indeed is called the Immortal.  
On it all the worlds do rest,  
And no one soever goes beyond it.  
This, verily, is That!
2. This whole world, whatever there is,  
Was created from and moves in Life.  
The great fear, the upraised thunderbolt—  
They who know That, become immortal.
3. From fear of Him fire doth burn.  
From fear the sun gives forth heat.  
From fear both Indra and Wind,  
And Death as fifth, do speed along....
6. The separate nature of the senses,  
And that their arising and setting  
Is of things that come into being apart [from himself],  
The wise man recognizes, and sorrows not.
9. His form is not to be beheld.  
No one soever sees Him with the eye.  
He is framed by the heart, by the thought, by the mind.  
They who know That become immortal.
10. When cease the five  
[Sense-] knowledges, together with the mind,  
And the intellect (*buddhi*) stirs not—  
That, they say, is the highest course.
11. This they consider as *yoga*—  
The firm holding back of the senses.  
Then one becomes undistracted.  
*Yoga*, truly, is the origin and the end.
12. Not by speech, not by mind,  
Not by sight can He be apprehended.  
How can He be comprehended  
Otherwise than by one's saying "He is"?...
13. He can indeed be comprehended by the thought "He is"  
And by [admitting] the real nature of both [his comprehensibility and his incomprehensibility].

*THE VEDIC PERIOD*

When he has been comprehended by the thought "He is"  
His real nature manifests itself.

14. When are liberated all  
The desires that lodge in one's heart,  
Then a mortal becomes immortal!  
Therein he reaches *Brahman*!
  15. When are cut all  
The knots of the heart here on earth,  
Then a mortal becomes immortal!
- Thus far is the instruction.

(vi.1-3, 6, 9-15)

4. PRAŚNA UPANIṢAD

As the name indicates, this work has its origin in the *questions* (six in all) which philosophers ask of the sage Pippalāda. His answers evolve in the end quite a systematic philosophy on creation, human personality, and the metaphysical principle in man. This indicates that the Upaniṣad must have been a late work.

*Questioners seek the highest Brahman from a teacher*

4. To him [a questioner] then he [Pippalāda, a seer,] said: "The Lord of Creation (Prajāpati), verily, was desirous of creatures (offspring, *prajā*). He performed austerity. Having performed austerity, he produces a pair, matter (*rayi*, fem.) and life (*prāṇa*, masc.), thinking 'These two will make creatures for me in manifold ways.'"

5. The sun, verily, is life; matter, indeed, is the moon. Matter, verily, is everything here, both what is formed and what is formless....

(i.4, 5)

*The Supreme Self, the ultimate basis of the manifold world and  
of the individual*

7. As birds resort to a tree for a resting-place, even so, O friend, it is to the supreme Self (*Ātman*) that everything here resorts:—<sup>1</sup>

8. Earth and the elements of earth, water and the elements of water, heat and the elements of heat, wind and the elements of wind, space and the elements of space, sight and what can be seen, hearing and what can be heard, smell and what can be smelled, taste and what can be tasted, the skin and what can be touched, speech and what can be spoken, the hands and what can be taken,

<sup>1</sup> The following is a noteworthy Sāṃkhya enumeration.—Hume.

the organ of generation and what can be enjoyed, the anus and what can be excreted, the feet and what can be walked, mind (*manas*) and what can be perceived, intellect (*buddhi*) and what can be conceived, egoism (*ahamkāra*) and what can be connected with "me," thought (*citta*) and what can be thought, brilliance and what can be illumined, life-breath and what can be supported.

9. Truly, this seer, toucher, hearer, smeller, taster, thinker, conceiver, doer, the conscious self (*vijñānātman*), the person—his resort is in the supreme imperishable Self (*Ātman*). (iv.7–9)

### 5. MUṄDAKA UPANIṢAD

This is the most poetical of the Upaniṣads. The philosophy expressed is mostly eclectic, and, generally speaking, the subject-matter is that which is common to all the Upaniṣads. Worthy of special mention, however, is the theory of two kinds of knowledge, a higher (*parā*) and a lower (*aparā*).

The name means "shaven," and presumably was given to this Upaniṣad because it emphasizes the life of *sannyāsa* (austerity) as contrasted with the life of sacrifice and work. The *sannyāsin* is shaved of ignorance and of concern for work or religious practices.

#### *Two kinds of knowledge*

4. [Āṅgiras said:] "There are two knowledges to be known—as indeed the knowers of *Brahman* are wont to say: a higher (*parā*) and also a lower (*aparā*).

5. Of these, the lower is the *Rg Veda*, the *Tajur Veda*, the *Sāma Veda*, the *Atharva Veda*....

Now, the higher is that whereby that Imperishable is apprehended....

6. That which is invisible, ungraspable, without family, without caste—

Without sight or hearing is It, without hand or foot,  
Eternal, all-pervading, omnipresent, exceedingly subtle;  
That is the Imperishable, which the wise perceive as the source  
of beings.

7. As a spider emits and draws in [its thread],  
As herbs arise on the earth,  
As the hairs of the head and body from a living person,  
So from the Imperishable arises everything here. (i.i.4–7)

## *The supremacy of knowledge of Brahman over sacrifice*

10. Thinking sacrifice and merit is the chiefest thing,  
Naught better do they know—deluded!  
Having had enjoyment on the top of the heaven won by good  
works,  
They re-enter this world, or a lower.
  11. They who practise austerity and faith in the forest,  
The peaceful knowers who live on alms,  
Depart passionless through the door of the sun,  
To where is that immortal Person (*Purusa*), e'en the imperishable  
Self (*Ātman*)....
  12. Having scrutinized the worlds that are built up by work, a  
*brāhmaṇī*  
Should arrive at indifference. The [world] that was not made  
is not [won] by what is done.  
For the sake of this knowledge let him go, fuel in hand,  
To a spiritual teacher who is learned in the scriptures and  
established on *Brahman*. (i.ii.10–12)

### *The doctrine of Brahman-Ātman*

1. This is the truth:—

As, from a well-blazing fire, sparks  
By the thousand issue forth of like form,  
So from the Imperishable, my friend, beings manifold  
Are produced, and thither also go.
  2. Heavenly, formless is the Person.

He is without and within, unborn,  
Breathless, mindless, pure,  
Higher than the high Imperishable.
  3. From Him is produced breath,

Mind, and all the senses,  
Space, wind, light, water,  
And earth, the supporter of all.
  4. Fire is His head; His eyes, the moon and sun;

The regions of space, His ears; His voice, the revealed Vedas;  
Wind, His breath; His heart, the whole world. Out of His  
feet, The earth. Truly, He is the Inner Self (*Atman*) of all.
  5. From him [proceeds] fire, whose fuel is the sun;

From the moon, rain; herbs, on the earth.

*THE UPANIṢADS*

- The male pours seed in the female.  
Many creatures are produced from the Person.
7. From Him, too, gods are manifoldly produced,  
The celestials, men, cattle, birds,  
The in-breath and the out-breath, rice and barley, austerity,  
Faith, truth, chastity, and the law.
10. The Person himself is everything here;  
Work and austerity and *Brahman*, beyond death.  
He who knows That, set in the secret place [of the heart]—  
He here on earth, my friend, rends asunder the knot of ignorance.
- (ii.i.1–5, 7, 10)

*The All-inclusive Brahman*

1. Manifest, [yet] hidden; called “Moving-in-secret”;  
The great abode! Therein is placed that  
Which moves and breathes and winks.  
What that is, know as Being and Non-being,  
As the object of desire, higher than understanding,  
As what is the best of creatures!
2. That which is flaming, which is subtler than the subtle,  
On which the worlds are set, and their inhabitants  
That is the imperishable *Brahman*.  
It is life, and It is speech and mind.  
That is the real. It is immortal.  
It is [a mark] to be penetrated. Penetrate It, my friend!
3. Taking as a bow the great weapon of the Upaniṣad,  
One should put upon it an arrow sharpened by meditation.  
Stretching it with a thought directed to the essence of That,  
Penetrate that Imperishable as the mark, my friend.
4. The mystic syllable *Om* is the bow. The arrow is the Self (*Ātman*).  
*Brahman* is said to be the mark.  
By the undistracted man is It to be penetrated.  
One should come to be in It, as the arrow [in the mark].
9. In the highest golden sheath  
Is *Brahman*, without stain, without parts.  
Brilliant is It, the light of lights—  
That which knowers of the Self (*Ātman*) do know!

(ii.ii.1–4, 9)

### *The way to Brahman*

1. Two birds, fast bound companions,  
Clasp close the self-same tree.  
Of these two, the one eats sweet fruit;  
The other looks on without eating.
  2. On the self-same tree a person, sunken,  
Grieves for his impotence, deluded;  
When he sees the other, the Lord (*Īśā*), contented,  
And his greatness, he becomes freed from sorrow.
  3. When a seer sees the brilliant  
Maker, Lord, Person, the *Brahman*-source,  
Then, being a knower, shaking off good and evil,  
Stainless, he attains supreme identity [with Him].
  5. This Self (*Ātman*) is obtainable by truth, by austerity,  
By proper knowledge, by the student's life of chastity constantly  
[practiced].  
Within the body, consisting of light, pure is He  
Whom the ascetics, with imperfections done away, behold.
  8. Not by sight is It grasped, not even by speech,  
Not by any other sense-organs, austerity, or work.  
By the peace of knowledge, one's nature purified—  
In that way, however, by meditating, one does behold Him who  
is without parts. (iii.i.1–3, 5, 8)

1. . . They who, being without desire, worship the Person  
And are wise, pass beyond the seed [of rebirth] here.
  2. He who in fancy forms desires,  
Because of his desires is born [again] here and there.  
But of him whose desire is satisfied, who is a perfected self,  
All desires even here on earth vanish away.
  3. This Self (*Atman*) is not to be obtained by instruction,  
Nor by intellect, nor by much learning.  
He is to be obtained only by the one whom He chooses;  
To such a one that Self reveals His own person.
  4. This Self is not to be obtained by one destitute of fortitude,  
Nor through heedlessness, nor through a false notion of  
austerity.  
But he who strives by these means, provided he knows—  
Into his *Brahman*-abode this Self enters.

*THE UPANIṢADS*

5. Attaining Him, the seers who are satisfied with knowledge,  
Who are perfected selves, from passion free, tranquil—  
Attaining Him who is the universally omnipresent, those wise,  
Devout selves into the All itself do enter.
7. Gone are the fifteen parts according to their station,  
Even all the sense-organs in their corresponding divinities !  
One's deeds and the self that consists of understanding—  
All become unified in the supreme Imperishable.
8. As the flowing rivers in the ocean  
Disappear, quitting name and form,  
So the knower, being liberated from name and form,  
Goes unto the Heavenly Person, higher than the high.
9. He, verily, who knows that supreme *Brahman*, becomes very  
*Brahman*....

(iii.ii.1–5, 7–9)

## 9. CHĀNDOGYA UPANIṢAD

This is one of the oldest and best known of the Upaniṣad. Many important teachings are contained in it, but perhaps the most popular passage in the whole work is the story of Satyakāma Jābāla and his truthful mother, in which it is demonstrated that the status of the *brāhmaṇī* is determined by character rather than by birth. The central teaching of the Upaniṣad, associated with the philosopher Āruṇi, is the basic doctrine of the identity of the *Ātman*, the psychical principle within, and the *Brahman*, the universal principle of nature. This doctrine is expressed in the very famous saying, “*Tat tvam asi* (That art thou).” In this Upaniṣad is also found a delineation of the significance of the mystic syllable *Om*, as well as some of the famous theories of creation, such as the cosmic-egg theory.

The name of the Upaniṣad is derived from the word *chanda*, which means meter, and it is so named because it is capable of being recited in metrical style.

### *The sacred syllable “Om”*

1. *Om!* One should meditate on this syllable [the *Udgītha*, loud chant], for one sings the loud chant [beginning] with “*Om.*” [Revised tr.]

The further explanation thereof [is as follows].—

2. The essence of things here is the earth.

The essence of the earth is water.

The essence of water is plants.

The essence of plants is a person (*puruṣa*).

The essence of a person is speech.

The essence of speech is the *Rg* (hymn).

The essence of the *Rg* is the *Sāman* (chant).

The essence of the *Sāman* is the *Udgītha* (loud singing)....

5. The *Rg* is speech. The *Sāman* is breath. The *Udgītha* is this syllable “*Om.*”<sup>1</sup>

(i.i.1–2, 5)

<sup>1</sup> See also *Māndūkya Upaniṣad*.

3. . . . As all leaves are held together by a spike, so all speech is held together by *Om*. Verily, *Om* is the world-all. Verily, *Om* is this world-all.  
(ii.xxiii.3)

*The three branches of duty*

1. There are three branches of duty. Sacrifice, study of the Vedas, alms-giving—that is the first. [2] Austerity, indeed, is the second. A student of sacred knowledge (*brahmačārin*) dwelling in the house of a teacher, settling himself permanently in the house of a teacher, is the third....  
(ii.xxiii.1)

*The individual self identical with the infinite Brahman*

1. Verily, this whole world is *Brahman*. Tranquil, let one worship It as that from which he came forth, as that into which he will be dissolved, as that in which he breathes....

2. He who consists of mind, whose body is life (*prāṇa*), whose form is light, whose conception is truth, whose self is space, containing all works, containing all desires, containing all odors, containing all tastes, encompassing this whole world, the unspeaking, the unconcerned—this Self of mine within the heart is smaller than a grain of rice, or a barley-corn, or a mustard-seed, or a grain of millet, or the kernel of a grain of millet; this Self of mine within the heart is greater than the earth, greater than the atmosphere, greater than the sky, greater than these worlds.

4. Containing all works, containing all desires, containing all odors, containing all tastes, encompassing this whole world, the unspeaking, the unconcerned—this is the Self of mine within the heart, this is *Brahman*. Into him I shall enter on departing hence....  
(iii.xiv.1–2, 4)

*The cosmic egg*

1. The sun is *Brahman*—this is the teaching. A further explanation thereof [is as follows]:

In the beginning this world was merely non-being. It was existent. It developed. It turned into an egg. It lay for the period of a year. It was split asunder. One of the two eggshell-parts became silver, one gold.

2. That which was of silver is this earth. That which was of gold is the sky. What was the outer membrane is the mountains. What was the inner membrane is cloud and mist. What were the veins are the rivers. What was the fluid within is the ocean.

*THE VEDIC PERIOD*

3. Now, what was born therefrom is yonder sun. When it was born, shouts and hurrahs, all beings and all desires rose up toward it. Therefore at its rising and at its every return shouts and hurrahs, all beings and all desires rise up toward it.

4. He who, knowing it thus, reverences the sun as *Brahman*—the prospect is that pleasant shouts will come unto him and delight him—yea, delight him! (iii.xix.1–4)

*The story of Jābāla, a brāhmaṇī*

1. Once upon a time Satyakāma Jābāla addressed his mother Jabālā: “Madam! I desire to live the life of a student of sacred knowledge. Of what family, pray, am I?”

2. Then she said to him: “I do not know this, my dear—of what family you are. In my youth, when I went about a great deal serving as a maid, I got you. So I do not know of what family you are. However, I am Jabālā by name; you are Satyakāma by name. So you may speak of yourself as Satyakāma Jābāla.”

3. Then he went to Hāridrumata Gautama, and said: “I will live the life of a student of sacred knowledge. I will become a pupil of yours, Sir.”

4. To him he then said: “Of what family, pray, are you, my dear?”

Then he said: “I do not know this, Sir, of what family I am. I asked my mother. She answered me: ‘In my youth, when I went about a great deal serving as a maid, I got you. So I do not know this, of what family you are. However, I am Jabālā by name; you are Satyakāma by name.’ So I am Satyakāma Jābāla, Sir.”

5. To him he then said: “A non-brāhmaṇī would not be able to explain thus. Bring the fuel, my dear. I will receive you as a pupil. You have not deviated from the truth.” (iv.iv.1–5)

*Brahman as life, joy, and the void*

4. ... Then they said to him: [5] “*Brahman* is life (*prāṇa*). *Brahman* is joy. *Brahman* is the void.”

Then he said: I understand that *Brahman* is life. But joy and void I do not understand.”

They said: “Joy (*ka*)—verily, that is the same as the Void (*kha*). The Void—verily, that is the same as Joy....” (rv.x.4–5)

*Man's destiny determined by his conduct*

7. ... those who are of pleasant conduct here—the prospect is, indeed, that they will enter a pleasant womb, either the womb of a

*brāhmaṇin*, or the womb of a *kṣatriya*, or the womb of a *vaiśya*. But those who are of stinking conduct here—the prospect is, indeed, that they will enter a stinking womb, either the womb of a dog, or the womb of a swine, or the womb of an outcast (*candāla*). (v.x.7)

*The universal Self*

1. “Aupamanyava, whom do you reverence as the *Ātman*? ”

“The heaven indeed, sir, O King,” said he.

“The Universal *Ātman* is, verily, that brightly shining one which you reverence as the *Ātman*....

2. “... That, however, is only the head of the *Ātman*,” said he....

(v.xii.1-2)

1. Then he said to Satyayajña Pauluṣi: “Prācīnayogya! Whom do you reverence as the *Ātman*? ”

“The sun indeed, sir, O King,” said he.

“The Universal *Ātman* is, verily, that manifold one which you reverence as the *Ātman*.... That, however, is only the eye of the *Ātman*,” said he.... (v.xiii.1)

1. Then he said to Indradyumna Bhāllaveya: “Vaiyāghrapadaya! Whom do you reverence as the *Ātman*? ”

“The wind indeed, sir, O King,” said he.

“The Universal *Ātman* is, verily, that which possesses various paths, which you reverence as the *Ātman*....

2. “... That, however, is only the breath of the *Ātman*,” said he.... (v.xiv.1-2)

1. Then he said to Jana: “Śārkarākṣya! Whom do you reverence as the *Ātman*? ”

“Space indeed, sir, O King,” said he.

“The Universal *Ātman* is, verily, that expanded one, which you reverence as the *Ātman*....

2. “... That, however, is only the body of the *Ātman*,” said he.... (v.xv.1-2)

1. Then he said to Budila Āśvatarāśvi: “Vaiyāghrapadaya! Whom do you reverence as the *Ātman*? ”

“Water indeed, sir, O King,” said he.

“The Universal *Ātman* is, verily, that wealth, which you reverence as the *Ātman*....

2. “... That, however, is only the bladder of the *Ātman*,” said he.... (v.xvi.1-2)

*THE VEDIC PERIOD*

1. Then he said to Uddālaka Āruṇi: "Gautama! Whom do you reverence as the *Ātman*??"

"The earth indeed, sir, O King," said he.

"The Universal *Ātman* is, verily, that support, which you reverence as the *Ātman*....

2. "... That, however, is only the feet of the *Ātman*," said he....  
(v.xviii.1-2)

1. Then he said to them: "Verily, indeed, you here eat food, knowing this Universal *Ātman* as if something separate. He however, who reverences this Universal *Ātman* that is of the measure of the span—thus [yet], is to be measured by thinking of oneself—he eats food in all worlds, in all beings, in all selves."  
(v.xviii.1)

*Being as the source of all*

1. "In the beginning, my dear, this world was just Being (*sat*), one only, without a second. To be sure, some people say: 'In the beginning this world was just Non-being (*a-sat*), one only, without a second; from that Non-being Being was produced.'"

2. "But verily, my dear, whence could this be?" said he. "How from Non-being could Being be produced? On the contrary, my dear, in the beginning this world was just Being, one only, without a second."

3. "It bethought itself: 'Would that I were many! Let me procreate myself!'"...  
(vi.ii.1-3)

*In sleep one reaches Being*

1. Then Uddālaka Āruṇi said to his son, Śvetaketu, his son:... "When a person here sleeps, as it is called, then, my dear, he has reached Being, he has gone to his own...."  
(vi.viii.1)

1. "Now, when one is sound asleep; composed, serene, and knows no dream—that is the Self (*Ātman*)," said he. "That is the immortal, the fearless. That is *Brahman*...."  
(viii.xi.1)

*The unitary World-Self, the immanent reality  
of all things and of man*

1. "As the bees, my dear, prepare honey by collecting the essences of different trees and reducing the essence to a unity, [2] as they are not able to discriminate 'I am the essence of this tree,' 'I am the essence of that tree'—even so, indeed, my dear, all creatures here, though they reach Being, know not 'We have reached Being.'

3. "Whatever they are in this world, whether tiger, or lion, or wolf, or boar, or worm, or fly, or gnat, or mosquito, that they become.

4. "That which is the finest essence—this whole world has that as its self. That is Reality. That is *Ātman*. That art thou [*Tat tvam asi*], Švetaketu...." (vi. ix. 1-4)

1. "These rivers, my dear, flow, the eastern toward the east, the western toward the west. They go just from the ocean to the ocean. They become the ocean itself. As there they know not 'I am this one,' 'I am that one'—[2] even so, indeed, my dear, all creatures here, though they have come forth from Being, know not 'We have come forth from Being.' Whatever they are in this world, whether tiger, or lion, or wolf, or boar, or worm, or fly, or gnat, or mosquito, that they become.

3. "That which is the finest essence—this whole world has that as its self. That is Reality. That is *Ātman*. That art thou, Švetaketu...." (vi. x. 1-3)

1. "Bring hither a fig from there."

"Here it is, sir."

"Divide it."

"It is divided, Sir."

"What do you see there?"

"These rather fine seeds, Sir."

"Of these, please, divide one."

"It is divided, Sir."

"What do you see there?"

"Nothing at all, Sir."

2. Then he said to him: "Verily, my dear, that finest essence which you do not perceive—verily, my dear, from that finest essence this great Nyagrodha (sacred fig) tree thus arises.

3. Believe me, my dear," said he, "that which is the finest essence—this whole world has that as its self. That is Reality. That is *Ātman*. That art thou, Švetaketu...." (vi. xii. 1-3)

1. "Place this salt in the water. In the morning come unto me."

Then he did so.

Then he said to him: "That salt you placed in the water last evening—please bring it hither."

Then he grasped for it, but did not find it, as it was completely dissolved.

*THE VEDIC PERIOD*

2. "Please take a sip of it from this end," said he. "How is it?"  
"Salt."

"Take a sip from the middle," said he. "How is it?"  
"Salt."

"Take a sip from that end," said he. "How is it?"  
"Salt."

"Set it aside. Then come unto me."

He did so, saying, "It is always the same."

Then he said to him: "Verily, indeed, my dear, you do not perceive Being here. Verily, indeed, it is here.

3. That which is the finest essence—this whole world has that as its self. That is Reality. That art thou, *Svetaketu*."

(vi.xiii.1-3)

*Progressive worship of Brahman up to the universal Self*

5. "He who reverences name as *Brahman*—as far as name goes, so far he has unlimited freedom, he who reverences name as *Brahman*."

(vii.i.5)

2. "Speech, assuredly, is more than name.... Verily, if there were no speech, neither right nor wrong would be known, neither true nor false, neither good nor bad, neither pleasant nor unpleasant. Speech, indeed, makes all this known. Reverence speech." (vii.ii.1)

1. "Mind (*manas*), assuredly, is more than speech.... Truly the self (*ātman*) is mind. Truly, the world is mind. Truly, *Brahman* is mind." (vii.iii.1)

1. "Conception (*samkalpa*), assuredly, is more than mind."

(vii.iv.1)

1. "Thought (*citta*), assuredly, is more than conception. Verily, when one thinks, then he forms a conception, then he has in mind, then he utters speech, and he utters it in name....

2. "Truly, indeed, thought is the union-point, thought is the self (*ātman*), thought is the support of these things. Reverence thought." (vii.v.1-2)

1. "Meditation (*dhyāna*), assuredly, is more than thought."

(vii.vi.1)

1. "Understanding (*vijñāna*), assuredly, is more than meditation. Verily, by understanding one understands the *Rg Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sāma Veda*, the *Atharva Veda*." (vii.vii.1)

*THE UPANIṢADS*

1. "Strength, assuredly, is more than understanding. Indeed, one man of strength causes a hundred men of understanding to tremble." (vii.viii.1)

1. "Food, assuredly, is more than strength. Therefore, if one should not eat for ten days, even though he might live, yet verily he becomes a non-seer, a non-hearer, a non-thinker, a non-perceiver, a non-doer, a non-understander." (vii.ix.1)

1. "Water, verily, is more than food. Therefore, when there is not a good rain, living creatures sicken with the thought, 'Food will become scarce.'" (vii.x.1)

1. "Heat, verily, is more than water. That, verily, seizes hold of the wind, and heats the ether (*ākāśa*). Then people say: 'It is hot! It is burning hot! Surely it will rain!'" (vii.xi.1)

1. "Space (*ākāśa*), assuredly, is more than heat. In space, verily, are both sun and moon, lightning, stars and fire. Through space one calls out; through space one hears; through space one answers. In space one enjoys himself; in space one does not enjoy himself. In space one is born; unto space one is born. Reverence space." (vii.xii.1)

1. "Memory, verily, is more than space. Therefore, even if many not possessing memory should be assembled; indeed they would not hear any one at all, they would not think, they would not understand...." (vii.xiii.1)

1. "Hope, assuredly, is more than memory. When kindled by hope, verily, memory learns the sacred sayings; [kindled by hope] one performs sacred works, longs for sons and cattle, for this world and the yonder. Reverence hope." (vii.xiv.1)

1. "Life (*prāṇa*, breath), verily, is more than hope. Just as, verily, the spokes are fastened in the hub, so on this vital breath everything is fastened. Life goes on with vital breath (*prāṇa*). Vital breath gives life."

4. "For, indeed, vital breath is all these things. Verily, he who sees this, thinks this, understands this, becomes a superior speaker." (vii.xv.1, 4)

1. "But he, verily, speaks superiorly who speaks superiorly with truth.... But one must ... desire to understand the truth." (vii.xvi.1)

THE VEDIC PERIOD

1. "Where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, understands nothing else—that is a plenum. But where one sees something else—that is the small. Verily, the plenum is the same as the immortal; but the small is the same as the mortal." (vii.xxiv.1)

1. That [plenum], indeed, is below. It is above. It is to the west. It is to the east. It is to the south. It is to the north. It, indeed, is this whole world.

"I [the ego], indeed, am below. I am above. I am to the west. I am to the east. I am to the south. I am to the north. I, indeed, am this whole world.

2. "... The Self (*Ātman*), indeed, is below. The Self is above. The Self is to the west. The Self is to the east. The Self is to the south. The Self is to the north. The Self, indeed, is this whole world.

"Verily, he who sees this, who thinks this, who understands this, who has pleasure in the Self, who has delight in the Self, who has intercourse with the Self, who has bliss in the Self—he is autonomous; he has unlimited freedom in all worlds. But they who know otherwise than this are heteronomous; they have perishable worlds; in all worlds they have no freedom." (vii.xxv.1-2)

1. Verily, for him who sees this, who thinks this, who understands this, vital breath arises from the Self (*Ātman*); hope, from the Self; memory, from the Self; space, from the Self; heat, from the Self; water, from the Self, appearance and disappearance, from the Self; food, from the Self; strength, from the Self; understanding, from the Self; meditation, from the Self; thought, from the Self; conception, from the Self; mind, from the Self; speech, from the Self; name, from the Self; sacred sayings, from the Self; sacred works, from the Self; indeed this whole world, from the Self. (vii.xxvi.1)

*The progressive instruction of Indra by Prajāpati  
concerning the real Self*

1. "The Self, which is free from evil, ageless, deathless, sorrowless, hungerless, thirstless, whose desire is the Real, whose conception is the Real—He should be searched out, Him one should desire to understand. He obtains all worlds and all desires who has found out and who understands that Self."—Thus spake Prajāpati.

2. Then both the gods and the devils heard it. Then they said: "Come! Let us search out that Self, the Self by searching out whom one obtains all worlds and all desires!"

Then Indra from among the gods went forth unto him, and Virocana from among the devils. Then, without communicating with each other, the two came into the presence of Prajāpati, fuel in hand [in token of discipleship].

3. Then for thirty-two years the two lived the chaste life of a student of sacred knowledge (*brahmacarya*).

Then Prajāpati said to the two: "Desiring what have you been living?"

Then the two said: "The Self, which is free from evil, ageless, deathless, sorrowless, hungerless, thirstless, whose desire is the Real, whose conception is the Real—He should be searched out, Him one should desire to understand. He obtains all worlds and all desires who has found out and who understands that Self.—Such do people declare to be your words, sir. We have been living desiring Him."

4. Then Prajāpati said to the two: "That Person who is seen in the eye—He is the Self of whom I spoke. That is the immortal, the fearless. That is *Brahman*."

"But this one, sir, who is observed in water and in a mirror—which one is he?"

"The same one, indeed, is observed in all these," said he.

(viii.vii.1-4)

1. "Look at yourself in a pan of water. Anything that you do not understand of the Self, tell me."

Then the two looked in a pan of water.

Then Prajāpati said to the two: "What do you see?"

Then the two said: "We see everything here, sir, a Self corresponding exactly, even to the hair and fingernails!"

2. Then Prajāpati said to the two: "Make yourselves well-ornamented, well-dressed, adorned, and look in a pan of water."

Then the two made themselves well-ornamented, well-dressed, adorned, and looked in a pan of water.

Then Prajāpati said to the two: "What do you see?"

3. Then the two said: "Just as we ourselves are here, sir, well-ornamented, well-dressed, adorned—so there, sir, well-ornamented, well-dressed, adorned."

"That is the Self," said he. "That is the immortal, the fearless. That is *Brahman*."

Then with tranquil heart the two went forth.

4. Then Prajāpati glanced after them, and said: "They go without having comprehended, without having found the Self. Whosoever

shall have such a doctrine (*upaniṣad*), be they gods or be they devils, they shall perish."

Then with tranquil heart Virocana came to the devils. To them he then declared this doctrine: "Oneself (*ātman*) is to be made happy here on earth. Oneself is to be waited upon. He who makes his own self (*ātman*) happy here on earth, who waits upon himself—he obtains both worlds, both this world and the yonder."

5. Therefore even now here on earth they say of one who is not a giver, who is not a believer, who is not a sacrificer, "Oh! devilish!" for such is the doctrine of the devils. They adorn the body (*śarīra*) of one deceased with what they have begged, with dress, with ornament, as they call it, for they think that thereby they will win yonder world. (viii.viii.1-5)

1. But then Indra, even before reaching the gods, saw this danger: "Just as, indeed, that one [i.e., the bodily self] is well-ornamented when this body (*śarīra*) is well-ornamented, well-dressed when this is well-dressed, adorned when this is adorned, even so that one is blind when this is blind, lame when this is lame, maimed when this is maimed. It perishes immediately upon the perishing of this body. I see nothing enjoyable in this."

2. Fuel in hand, back again he came. Then Prajāpati said to him: "Desiring what, O Maghavan (Munificent One), have you come back again, since you along with Virocana went forth with tranquil heart?"

Then he said: "Just as, indeed, that one [i.e., the bodily self] is well-ornamented when this body is well-ornamented, well-dressed when this is well-dressed, adorned when this is adorned, even so it is blind when this is blind, lame when this is lame, maimed when this is maimed. It perishes immediately upon the perishing of this body. I see nothing enjoyable in this."

3. "He is even so, O Maghavan," said he. "However, I will explain this further to you. Live with me thirty-two years more."

Then he lived with him thirty-two years more.

To him [i.e., to Indra] he [i.e., Prajāpati] then said:—

(viii.ix.1-3)

1. "He who moves about happy in a dream—he is the Self," said he. "That is the immortal, the fearless. That is *Brahman*."

Then with tranquil heart he [i.e., Indra] went forth.

Then, even before reaching the gods, he saw this danger: "Now,

even if this body is blind, that one [i.e., the Self, *Ātman*] is not blind. If this is lame, he is not lame. Indeed, he does not suffer defect through defect of this. [2] He is not slain with one's murder. He is not lame with one's lameness. Nevertheless, as it were, they kill him; as it were, they unclothe him; as it were, he comes to experience what is unpleasant; as it were, he even weeps. I see nothing enjoyable in this."

3. Fuel in hand, back again he came. Then Prajāpati said to him: "Desiring what, O Maghavan, have you come back again, since you went forth with tranquil heart?"

Then he said: "Now, sir, even if this body is blind, that one [i.e., the Self] is not blind. If this is lame, he is not lame. Indeed, he does not suffer defect through defect of this. [4] He is not slain with one's murder. He is not lame with one's lameness. Nevertheless, as it were, they kill him; as it were, they unclothe him; as it were, he comes to experience what is unpleasant; as it were, he even weeps. I see nothing enjoyable in this."

"He is even so, O Maghavan," said he. "However, I will explain this further to you. Live with me thirty-two years more."

Then he lived with him thirty-two years more.

To him [i.e., to Indra] he [i.e., Prajāpati] then said:—

(viii.x.1-4)

1. "Now, when one is sound asleep, composed, serene, and knows no dream—that is the Self," said he. "That is the immortal, the fearless. That is *Brahman*."

Then with tranquil heart he went forth.

Then, even before reaching the gods, he saw this danger: "Assuredly, indeed, this one does not exactly know himself (*ātmānam*) with the thought 'I am he,' nor indeed the things here. He becomes one who has gone to destruction. I see nothing enjoyable in this."

2. Fuel in hand, back again he came. Then Prajāpati said to him: "Desiring what, O Maghavan, have you come back again, since you went forth with tranquil heart?"

Then he [i.e., Indra] said: "Assuredly, this [self] does not exactly know himself with the thought 'I am he,' nor indeed the things here. He becomes one who has gone to destruction. I see nothing enjoyable in this."

3. "He is even so, O Maghavan," said he. "However, I will explain this further to you, and there is nothing else besides this. Live with me five years more."

Then he lived with him five years more.—That makes one hundred and one years. Thus it is that people say, “Verily, for one hundred and one years Maghavan lived the chaste life of a student of sacred knowledge (*brahmacarya*) with Prajāpati.”—

To him [i.e., to Indra] he [i.e., Prajāpati] then said:—

(viii.xi.1–3)

1. “O Maghavan, verily, this body (*sarīra*) is mortal. It has been appropriated by Death (Mṛtyu). [But] it is the standing-ground of that deathless, bodiless Self. Verily, he who is incorporate has been appropriated by pleasure and pain. Verily, there is no freedom from pleasure and pain for one while he is incorporate. Verily, while one is bodiless, pleasure and pain do not touch him.

2. “The wind is bodiless. Clouds, lightning, thunder—these are bodiless. Now as these, when they arise from yonder space and reach the highest light, appear each with its own form, [3] even so that serene one (*samprasāda*), when he rises up from this body and reaches the highest light, appears with his own form. Such a one is the supreme person (*uttama puruṣa*). There such a one goes around laughing, sporting, having enjoyment with women or chariots or friends, not remembering the appendage of this body. As a draft-animal is yoked in a wagon, even so this spirit (*prāṇa*) is yoked in this body.

4. “Now, when the eye is directed thus toward space, that is the seeing person (*cākṣuṣa puruṣa*); the eye is [the instrument] for seeing. Now, he who knows ‘Let me smell this’—that is the Self; the nose is [the instrument] for smelling. Now, he who knows ‘Let me utter this’—that is the Self; the voice is [the instrument] for utterance. Now, he who knows ‘Let me hear this’—that is the Self; the ear is [the instrument] for hearing.

5. “Now, he who knows ‘Let me think this’—that is the Self; the mind (*manas*) is his divine eye (*daiva cākṣu*). He verily, with that divine eye the mind, sees, desires here, and experiences enjoyment.

6. “Verily, those gods who are in the Brahmā-world reverence that Self. Therefore all worlds and all desires have been appropriated by them. He obtains all worlds and all desires who has found out and who understands that Self.”

Thus spake Prajāpati—yea, thus spake Prajāpati! (viii.xii.1–6)

*Final words to the departing pupil*

This did Brahmā tell to Prajāpati; Prajāpati, to Manu; Manu, to human beings (*prajā*).

He who according to rule has learned the Veda from the family of a teacher, in time left over from doing work for the teacher; he who, after having come back again, in a home of his own continues Veda-study in a clean place and produces [sons and pupils]; he who has concentrated all his senses upon the Self; he who is harmless (*ahimsant*) toward all things elsewhere than at holy places (*tūrtha*)—he, indeed, who lives thus throughout his length of life, reaches the Brahmā-world and does not return hither again—yea, he does not return hither again!

(viii.xv)

## 10. BRĀHADĀRĀNYAKA UPANIṢAD

This Upaniṣad is the longest—the name means “great forest-book”—the most famous, and one of the oldest of all the Upaniṣads. In it is found, among many other valuable passages, the famous discourse between the great philosopher Yajñavalkya—perhaps the greatest of the Upaniṣadic sages—and his wife Maitreyī. It is in this discourse that we find one of the best expressions of the philosophical idealism of the Upaniṣads. Nowhere else is the notion of the transcendental *Ātman* as universal and undifferentiated consciousness better portrayed.

It is this Upaniṣad which has made famous the doctrine of “*Neti, Neti*” (“not this, not this”), the mystical doctrine of the indescribability of the Absolute.

Important passages in this Upaniṣad are devoted to the effort to define *Brahman*, and to a consideration of the various theories of the nature of the ultimate.

*The creation of the manifold world from the unitary Self*

1. In the beginning this world was Self (*Ātman*) alone in the form of a Person. Looking around, he saw nothing else than himself. He said first: “I am.” Thence arose the name “I.” Therefore even today, when one is addressed, he says first just “It is I” and then speaks whatever name he has. Since before all this world he burned up ( $\sqrt{uṣ}$ ) all evils, therefore he is a person (*pur-uṣ-a*). He who knows this, verily, burns up him who desires to be ahead of him.

2. He was afraid. Therefore one who is alone is afraid. This one then thought to himself: “Since there is nothing else than myself, of what am I afraid?” Thereupon, verily, his fear departed, for of what

should he have been afraid? Assuredly it is from a second that fear arises.

3. Verily, he had no delight. Therefore one alone has no delight. He desired a second. He was, indeed, as large as a woman and a man closely embraced. He caused that self to fall into two pieces. Therefrom arose a husband and a wife. Therefore this [is true]: "Oneself is like a half-fragment,"... Therefore this space is filled by a wife. He copulated with her. Therefrom human beings were produced.

4. [She changed herself into the forms of various animals; he did likewise.] ... Thus, indeed, he created all....

5. He knew: "I, indeed, am this creation, for I emitted it all from myself." Thence arose creation. Verily, he who has this knowledge comes to be in that creation of his.

7. Verily, at that time the world was undifferentiated. It became differentiated just by name and form, as the saying is: "He has such a name, such a form."...

He entered in here, even to the fingernail-tips, as a razor would be hidden in a razor-case, or fire in a fire-holder. Him they see not, for [as seen] he is incomplete. When breathing, he becomes breath by name; when speaking, voice; when seeing, the eye; when hearing, the ear; when thinking, the mind: these are merely the names of his acts. Whoever worships one or another of these—he knows not; for he is incomplete with one or another of these. One should worship with the thought that he is just one's self, for therein all these become one. That same thing, namely, this self, is the trace of this All, for by it one knows this All.... He finds fame and praise who knows this....

10. Verily, in the beginning this world was *Brahman*.

It knew only itself: "I am *Brahman!*" Therefore it became the All. Whoever of the gods became awakened to this, he indeed became it; likewise in the case of seers, likewise in the case of men....

... Whoever thus knows "I am *Brahman!*" becomes this All; even the gods have not power to prevent his becoming thus, for he becomes their self....

11. Verily, in the beginning this world was *Brahman*, one only. Being one, he was not developed. He created still further a superior form, the *kṣātrahood*, even those who are *kṣātras* (rulers) among the gods: Indra, Varuṇa, Soma, Rudra, Parjanya, Yama, Mṛtyu, Isāna....

## THE UPANIṢADS

12. He was not yet developed. He created the *vis* (the commonalty), those kinds of gods that are mentioned in numbers: the Vasus, the Rudras, the Ādityas, the Viśvedevas, the Maruts.

13. He was not yet developed. He created the *sūdra* caste, Pūṣan. Verily, this [earth] is Pūṣan, for she nourishes (*√puṣ*) everything that is.

14. He was not yet developed. He created still further a better form, Law (*dharma*). This is the power of the *kṣatriya* class, viz., Law. Therefore there is nothing higher than Law. So a weak man controls a strong man by Law, just as if by a king. Verily, that which is Law is truth....

17. In the beginning this world was just the Self, one only. He wished: "Would that I had a wife; then I would procreate. Would that I had wealth; then I would offer sacrifice." So far as he does not obtain any one of these, he thinks that he is, assuredly, incomplete. Now his completeness is as follows: his mind truly is his self (*ātman*); his voice is his wife; his breath is his offspring; his eye is his worldly wealth, for with his eye he finds; his ear is his heavenly [wealth], for with his ear he hears it; his body (*ātman*), indeed, is his work, for with his body he performs work....

(I.iv.1–5, 7, 10–14, 17)

### *Progressive definition of Brahman as the world-source*

2–13. Gārgya [a seer] said: "The Person who is yonder in the sun ... moon ... lightning ... here in space ... wind ... fire ... water ... mirror ... the sound here which follows after one as he goes ... the Person who is here in the quarters of heaven ... who consists of shadow ... who is in the body (*ātman*)—him, indeed, I worship as *Brahman!*..."

20. Ajātaśatru said: "As a spider might come out with his thread, as small sparks come forth from the fire, even so from this Self come forth all vital energies, all worlds, all gods, all beings. The mystic meaning (*upaniṣad*) thereof is the Real of the real. Vital energies, verily, are the real. He is their Real."      (II.i.2–13, 20)

### *The two forms of Brahman*

1. There are, assuredly, two forms of *Brahman*: the formed and the formless, the mortal and the immortal, the stationary and the moving, the actual and the yon.

2. This is the formed—whatever is different from the wind and the atmosphere. This is mortal; this is stationary; this is actual. The

essence of this formed, mortal, stationary, actual [*Brahman*] is yonder [sun] which gives forth heat, for this is the essence of the actual.

3. Now the formless is the wind and the atmosphere. This is immortal, this is moving, this is the yon.... Thus with reference to the divinities. (ii.iii.1-3)

*The conversation of Yājñavalkya and Maitreyī concerning the pantheistic Self*

1. "Maitreyī!" said Yājñavalkya, "lo, verily, I am about to go forth from this state. Behold! let me make a final settlement for you and that Kātyāyanī."

2. Then said Maitreyī: "If now, sir, this whole earth filled with wealth were mine, would I be immortal thereby?"

"No," said Yājñavalkya. "As the life of the rich, even so would your life be. Of immortality, however, there is no hope through wealth."

3. Then said Maitreyī: "What should I do with that through which I may not be immortal? What you know, sir—that, indeed, tell me!"

4. Then said Yājñavalkya: "Ah! Lo, dear (*priyā*) as you are to us, dear is what you say! Come, sit down. I will explain to you. But while I am expounding, do you seek to ponder thereon."

5. Then said he: "Lo, verily, not for love of the husband is a husband dear, but for love of the Self (*Ātman*) a husband is dear.

"Lo, verily, not for love of the wife is a wife dear, but for love of the Self a wife is dear.

"Lo, verily, not for love of the sons are sons dear, but for love of the Self sons are dear.

"Lo, verily, not for love of the wealth is wealth dear, but for love of the Self wealth is dear.

"Lo, verily, not for love of *brāhmaṇinhood* is *brāhmaṇinhood* dear, but for love of the Self *brāhmaṇinhood* is dear.

"Lo, verily, not for love of *kṣātrahood* is *kṣātrahood* dear, but for love of the Self *kṣātrahood* is dear.

"Lo, verily, not for love of the worlds are the worlds dear, but for love of the Self the worlds are dear.

"Lo, verily, not for love of the gods are the gods dear, but for love of the Self the gods are dear.

"Lo, verily, not for love of the beings (*bhūta*) are beings dear, but for love of the Self beings are dear.

“Lo, verily, not for love of all is all dear, but for love of the Self all is dear.

“Lo, verily, it is the Self (*Ātman*) that should be seen, that should be hearkened to, that should be thought on, that should be pondered on, O Maitreyi. Lo, verily, with the seeing of, with the hearkening to, with the thinking of and with the understanding of the Self, this world-all is known.

6. “*Brāhmaṇhood* has deserted him who knows *brāhmaṇhood* in aught else than the Self.

“*Kṣātrahood* has deserted him who knows *kṣātrahood* in aught else than the Self.

“The worlds have deserted him who knows the worlds in aught else than the Self.

“The gods have deserted him who knows the gods in aught else than the Self.

“Beings have deserted him who knows beings in aught else than the Self.

“Everything has deserted him who knows everything in aught else than the Self.

“This *brāhmaṇhood*, this *kṣātrahood*, these worlds, these gods, these beings, everything here is what this Self is.

7. “It is—as, when a drum is being beaten, one would not be able to grasp the external sounds, but by grasping the drum or the beater of the drum the sound is grasped.

8. “It is—as, when a conch-shell is being blown, one would not be able to grasp the external sounds, but by grasping the conch-shell or the blower of the conch-shell the sound is grasped.

9. “It is—as, when a lute is being played, one would not be able to grasp the external sounds, but by grasping the lute or the player of the lute the sound is grasped.

10. “It is—as, from a fire laid with damp fuel, clouds of smoke separately issue forth, so, lo, verily, from this great Being (*bhūta*) has been breathed forth that which is *Rg Veda*, *Yajur Veda*, *Sāma Veda*, [Hymns] of the Atharvans and Āngirases, Legend (*itihāsa*), Ancient Lore (*purāṇa*), Sciences (*vidyā*), Mystic Doctrines (*upaniṣad*), Verses (*śloka*), Aphorisms (*sūtra*), Explanations (*anuvyākhyāna*), and Commentaries (*vyākhyāna*). From it, indeed, are all these breathed forth.

11. “It is—as of all waters the uniting-point is the sea, so of all touches the uniting-point is the skin, so of all tastes the uniting-point is the tongue, so of all smells the uniting-point is the nostrils, so of

all forms the uniting-point is the eye, so of all sounds the uniting-point is the ear, so of all intentions (*samkalpa*) the uniting-point is the mind (*manas*), so of all knowledges the uniting-point is the heart, so of all acts (*karma*) the uniting-point is the hands, so of all pleasures (*ānanda*) the uniting-point is the generative organ, so of all evacuations the uniting-point is the anus, so of all journeys the uniting-point is the feet, so of all the Vedas the uniting-point is speech.

12. “It is—as a lump of salt cast in water would dissolve right into the water; there would not be [any] of it to seize forth, as it were (*iva*), but wherever one may take, it is salty indeed—so, lo, verily, this great Being (*bhūta*), infinite, limitless, is just a mass of knowledge (*vijñāna-ghana*). ”

“Arising out of these elements (*bhūta*), into them also one vanishes away. After death there is no consciousness (*na pretya samjñā 'sti*). Thus, lo, say I.” Thus spake Yājñavalkya.

13. Then spake Maitreyī: “Herein, indeed, you have bewildered me, sir—in saying (*iti*): ‘After death there is no consciousness’!”

Then spake Yājñavalkya: “Lo, verily, I speak not bewilderment (*moha*). Sufficient, lo, verily, is this for understanding.

14. “For where there is a duality (*dvaita*), as it were (*iva*), there one sees another; there one smells another; there one hears another; there one speaks to another; there one thinks of another; there one understands another. Where, verily, everything has become just one’s own self, then whereby and whom would one smell? then whereby and whom would one see? then whereby and whom would one hear? then whereby and to whom would one speak? then whereby and on whom would one think? then whereby and whom would one understand? Whereby would one understand him by whom one understands this All? Lo, whereby would one understand the understander?”

(II.iv.1-14)

#### *The fettered self and its fate at death*

12. “Yājñavalkya,” said he [Jāratkārava Ārtabhāga], “when a man dies, what does not leave him?”

“The name. Endless, verily, is the name. Endless are the All-gods. An endless world he wins thereby.”

13. “Yājñavalkya,” said he, “when the voice of a dead man goes into fire, his breath into wind, his eye into the sun, his mind into the moon, his hearing into the quarters of heaven, his body into the earth, his self (*ātman*) into space, the hairs of his head into plants, the hairs

of his body into trees, and his blood and semen are placed in water, what then becomes of this person?"

"Ārtabhāga, my dear, take my hand. We two only will know of this. This is not for us two [to speak of] in public."

The two went away and deliberated. What they said was *karma* (action). What they praised was *karma*. Verily, one becomes good by good action, bad by bad action.

Thereupon Jāratkārava Ārtabhāga held his peace.

(III.ii.12, 13)

1. Then Uṣasta Cākrāyaṇa questioned him. "Yājñavalkya," said he, "explain to me him who is the *Brahman* present and not beyond our ken, him who is the Self in all things...."

"He is your self (*ātman*), which is in all things...." (III.iv.1)

*The practical way of knowing Brahman—by asceticism*

[Yājñavalkya said:] "He who passes beyond hunger and thirst, beyond sorrow and delusion, beyond old age and death—*brāhmins* who know such a Self overcome desire for sons, desire for wealth, desire for worlds, and live the life of mendicants. For desire for sons is desire for wealth, and desire for wealth is desire for worlds, for both these are merely desires. Therefore let a *brāhmin* become disgusted with learning and desire to live as a child. When he has become disgusted both with the state of childhood and with learning, then he becomes an ascetic. When he has become disgusted both with the non-ascetic state and with the ascetic state, then he becomes a *brāhmin*."

"By what means would he become a *brāhmin*?"

"By that means by which he does become such a one. Aught else than this Self (*Ātman*) is wretched." (III.v)

*The regressus to Brahman, the ultimate world-ground*

Then Gārgī Vācaknavī questioned him. "Yājñavalkya," said she, "since all this world is woven, warp and woof, on water, on what, pray, is the water woven, warp and woof?"

"On wind, O Gārgi."

"On what then, pray, is the wind woven, warp and woof?"

"On the atmosphere-worlds, O Gārgi."

"On what then, pray, are the atmosphere-worlds woven, warp and woof?"

"On the worlds of the Gandharvas, O Gārgi."

*THE VEDIC PERIOD*

“On what then, pray, are the worlds of the Gandharvas woven, warp and woof?”

“On the worlds of the sun, O Gārgi.”

“On what then, pray, are the worlds of the sun woven, warp and woof?”

“On the worlds of the moon, O Gārgi.”

“On what then, pray, are the worlds of the moon woven, warp and woof?”

“On the worlds of the stars, O Gārgi.”

“On what then, pray, are the worlds of the stars woven, warp and woof?”

“On the worlds of the gods, O Gārgi.”

“On what then, pray, are the worlds of the gods woven, warp and woof?”

“On the worlds of Indra, O Gārgi.”

“On what then, pray, are the worlds of Indra woven, warp and woof?”

“On the worlds of Prajāpati, O Gārgi.”

“On what then, pray, are the worlds of Prajāpati woven, warp and woof?”

“On the worlds of *Brahman*, O Gārgi.”

“On what then, pray, are the worlds of *Brahman* woven, warp and woof?”

Yājñavalkya said: “Gārgi, do not question too much, lest your head fall off. In truth, you are questioning too much about a divinity about which further questions cannot be asked. Gārgi, do not over-question.” (III.vi)

*The immortal universal Self, the Inner Controller*

15. [Yājñavalkya said:] “He who, dwelling in all things, yet is other than all things, whom all things do not know, whose body all things are, who controls all things from within—He is your Self, the Inner Controller, the Immortal....

23. “He is the unseen Seer, the unheard Hearer, the unthought Thinker, the ununderstood Understanter. Other than He there is no seer. Other than He there is no hearer. Other than He there is no thinker. Other than He there is no understander. He is your Self, the Inner Controller, the Immortal.” (III.vii.15, 23)

*The ultimate warp of the world—the unqualified Imperishable*

6. She [Gārgī Vācaknavi] said: “That, O Yājñavalkya, which is above the sky, that which is beneath the earth, that which is between these two, sky and earth, that which people call the past and the present and the future—across what is that woven, warp and woof?”

7. He said: “...across space alone is that woven, warp and woof.” “Across what then, pray, is space woven, warp and woof?”

8. He said: “That, O Gārgi, *brāhmaṇis* call the Imperishable. It is not coarse, not fine, not short, not long, not glowing [like fire], not adhesive [like water], without shadow and without darkness, without air and without space, without stickiness, (intangible), odorless, tasteless, without eye, without ear, without voice, without wind, without energy, without breath, without mouth, (without personal or family name, unaging, undying, without fear, immortal, stainless, not uncovered, not covered), without measure, without inside and without outside....

11. “Verily, O Gārgi, that Imperishable is the unseen Seer, the unheard Hearer, the unthought Thinker, the ununderstood Understander. Other than It there is naught that sees . . . hears . . . thinks . . . understands. Across this Imperishable, O Gārgi, is space woven, warp and woof.” (III.viii.6–8, 11)

*Regressus of the numerous gods to the unitary Brahman*

1. Then Vidagdha Śākalya questioned him. “How many gods are there, Yājñavalkya?”

He answered in accord with the following *Nivid* (invocationary formula): “As many as are mentioned in the *Nivid* of the “Hymn to All the Gods,” namely, three hundred and three, and three thousand and three [=3306].”

“Yes,” said he, “but just how many gods are there, Yājñavalkya?”

“Thirty-three.”

“Yes,” said he, “but just how many gods are there, Yājñavalkya?”

“Six.”

“Yes,” said he, “but just how many gods are there, Yājñavalkya?”

“Three.”

“Yes,” said he, “but just how many gods are there, Yājñavalkya?”

“Two.”

“Yes,” said he, “but just how many gods are there, Yājñavalkya?”

“One and a half.”

*THE VEDIC PERIOD*

"Yes," said he, "but just how many gods are there, Yājñavalkya?"

"One...."

9. .... "Which is the one god?"

"Breath," said he. "They call him *Brahman*, the Yon."

(iii.ix.1, 9)

*The self as the light of man, and its various states*

2. "Yājñavalkya, what light does a person here have?"...

6. "...The self (*ātman*), indeed, is his light," said he, "for with the self, indeed, as his light one sits, moves around, does his work, and returns."

7. "Which is the self?"...

"The person here who among the senses is made of knowledge, who is the light in the heart. He, remaining the same, goes along both worlds, appearing to think, appearing to move about, for upon becoming asleep he transcends this world and the forms of death.

8. "Verily, this person, by being born and obtaining a body, is joined with evils. When he departs, on dying, he leaves evils behind.

9. "Verily, there are just two conditions of this person: the condition of being in this world and the condition of being in the other world. There is an intermediate third condition, namely, that of being in sleep. By standing in this intermediate condition one sees both those conditions, namely, being in this world and being in the other world. Now whatever the approach is to the condition of being in the other world, by making that approach one sees the evils [of this world] and the joys [of yonder world].

"When one goes to sleep, he takes along the material of this all-containing world, himself tears it apart, himself builds it up, and dreams by his own brightness, by his own light. Then this person becomes self-illuminated.

10. "There are no chariots there, no spans, no roads. But he projects from himself chariots, spans, roads. There are no blisses there, no pleasures, no delights. But he projects from himself blisses, pleasures, delights. There are no tanks there, no lotus-pools, no streams. But he projects from himself tanks, lotus-pools, streams. For he is a creator.

30. "Verily, while he does not there know, he is verily knowing, though he does not know (what is [usually] to be known); for there is no cessation of the knowing of a knower, because of his imperishability [as a knower]. It is not, however, a second thing, other than himself and separate, which he may know.

31. "Verily, where there seems to be another, there the one might see . . . smell . . . taste . . . speak to . . . hear . . . think of . . . touch . . . know the other.

32. "An ocean, a seer alone without duality, becomes he whose world is *Brahman*, O King!"—thus Yājñavalkya instructed him. "This is a man's highest path. This is his highest achievement. This is his highest world. This is his highest bliss. On a part of just this bliss other creatures have their living." (iv.iii.2, 6-10, 30-2)

*The self of the unreleased, and of the released, after death*

5. Verily, this self is *Brahman*, made of knowledge, of mind, of breath, of seeing, of hearing, of earth, of water, of wind, of space, of energy and of non-energy, of desire and of non-desire, of anger and of non-anger, of virtuousness and of non-virtuousness. It is made of everything. This is what is meant by the saying "made of this, made of that."

According as one acts, according as one conducts himself, so does he become. The doer of good becomes good. The doer of evil becomes evil. One becomes virtuous by virtuous action, bad by bad action.

But people say: "A person is made [not of acts, but] of desires only." [In reply to this I say:] As is his desire, such is his resolve; as is his resolve, such the action he performs; what action he performs, that he procures for himself.

6. On this point there is this verse:

Where one's mind is attached—the inner self  
Goes thereto with action, being attached to it alone.  
Obtaining the end of his action,  
Whatever he does in this world,  
He comes again from that world  
To this world of action.

—So the man who desires.

Now the man who does not desire.—He who is without desire, who is freed from desire, whose desire is satisfied, whose desire is the Self—his breaths do not depart. Being very *Brahman*, he goes to *Brahman*.

12. If a person knew the Self (*Atman*).

With the thought "I am he!"  
With what desire, for love of what  
Would he cling unto the body?

*THE VEDIC PERIOD*

13. He who has found and has awakened to the Self  
That has entered this conglomerate abode—  
He is the maker of everything, for he is the creator of all;  
The world is his: indeed, he is the world itself.
  19. By the mind alone is It [the ancient, primeval *Brahman*] to be  
perceived.  
There is on earth no diversity.  
He gets death after death,  
Who perceives here seeming diversity.
  20. As a unity only is It to be looked upon—  
This indemonstrable, enduring Being,  
Spotless, beyond space,  
The unborn Self, great, enduring.
  21. By knowing Him only, a wise  
*brāhmaṇī* should get for himself intelligence;  
He should not meditate upon many words,  
For that is a weariness of speech.
  22. Verily, he is the great, unborn Self, who is this [person] consisting of knowledge among the senses. In the space within the heart lies the ruler of all, the lord of all, the king of all. He does not become greater by good action nor inferior by bad action. He is the lord of all, the overlord of beings, the protector of beings. He is the separating dam for keeping these worlds apart.  
Such a one the *brāhmaṇīs* desire to know by repetition of the Vedas, by sacrifices, by offerings, by penance, by fasting. On knowing him, in truth, one becomes an ascetic. Desiring him only as their home, mendicants wander forth....
- (rv.iv.5–6, 12–13, 19–22)

*The universal Self*

15. For where there is a duality, as it were, there one sees another; there one smells another; there one tastes another; there one speaks to another; there one hears another; there one thinks of another; there one touches another; there one understands another. But where everything has become just one's own self, then whereby and whom would one see? ... smell? ... taste? ... speak [to]? ... hear? ... think [of]? ... touch? ... understand? whereby would one understand him by means of whom one understands this All?

That Self (*Ātman*) is not this, it is not that [this] (*neti, neti*). It is

*THE UPANIŞADS*

unseizable, for it cannot be seized; indestructible, for it cannot be destroyed; unattached, for it does not attach itself; is unbound, does not tremble, is not injured.... (iv.v.15)

*The three cardinal virtues*

... This same thing does the divine voice here, thunder, repeat: *Da! Da! Da!* that is, restrain yourselves, give, be compassionate. One should practise this same triad: self-restraint, giving, compassion.

(v.ii.3)