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## Bhashya on Kena Upanishad

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*Sri Madhvacharya  
Bhashya on  
Kena Upanishad*



*“केनेषितं पतति प्रेषितं मनः केन प्राणः प्रथमः प्रैति युक्तः |  
केनेषितां वाचमिमां वदन्ति चक्षुः श्रोत्रं क उ देवो युनक्ति ||  
अन्यदेव तत् विदिताथो अविदितादधि |  
इति शुश्रुम पूर्वेषां ये नस्तद् व्याचक्षिरे ||*

*With Explanatory Notes  
Nagesh D. Sonde*

## *Kena Upanishad*

### *Introduction*

Human being is the child of Nature and everything in nature has influenced his thinking. Everything in Nature becomes his integral part. Seeing space spread around him, the unending earth below and the limitless sky above, the twinkling stars hiding when the Sun rises at dawn, seeds sprouting to become plants and tress, bearing flowers and fruits, the fruits containing within themselves innumerable seeds capable of growing in to trees, lowers and fruits, cows bearing calves, and women bearing children, in an successive cycle of creation and re-creation, as it were, death and dissipation not determining them from the life of abundance, he wonders at the earth on which he stands and the sky above him handing as it were without any support, he experiences all-embracing arms of his mother and the protective comfort of his father. While the howling winds frighten him but the cool breeze caressing him, the cool Moon soothes his senses, the luminous Sun guides him to action even as the fires energize his enterprise – all appearing to take active part in his life, both with malevolence and benevolence, all as in a large family, he playing his significant part on a vast stage.

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Much before a man thinks in logical manner, his emotions are geared up to wonder at every impulse that flashes across his mind, responding to them as his nature impels. This inquisitive instinct is not restricted to human beings but also is extended to creatures in animal world. But while human beings use विवेक, the discriminative faculty to arrive at a conclusion, animals respond to their stimuli.

This *Upanishad* derives its name from the first word used therein - केन, ‘By whom energized does the mind proceed toward the objects ? By whom ordained does breath, the first among the gods makes moves ? by whom desired does the speech is here spoken ? By whom , verily, the gods of sight and sound are initiated ?’ continuing as intellectuals’ approach, reflecting and meditating on the *vedic seer’s* vision which found expression in *Rigveda* wondering ‘को अद्वा वेद क इह प्र वोचात्कुत आजाता कुत इयं विसृष्टिः | अर्वाद्धेवा अस्य विसर्जनेनाथा को वेद यत आबभूव ||’ (X.129.6) - *Who knows here knows and who here can declare; whence it was born and whence was this creation? Later than this creation were the luminous divinities; who can declare here, whence it came in Existence?* Even as he speculates, the seer ventures to accept that his vision is not possible to reach for the answer and admits the inadequacy of his power of speculation, declaring “*This is other than what we know and higher than the unknown . . .*”

This *Upanishad* is also referred as *Talavakar Upanishad*, which name *Madhva* prefers. *Madhva* suggests that the various gods, who are adored here do not represent *Brahman*, but are only the energy centres, who are in eternal liberated state, *Brahman* being *Sriman Narayana* alone as the ever-pervading *Vishnu* and no one else. *Vishnu* dwells in the heart of each *Jiva*, as *Vamana* to energize him to perform actions. The one, who thinks that he knows Him well, does not really know Him, not even *Brahma*, the first one born among the gods. The inability to know the Supreme Person through the gross body is highlighted, even while emphasizing that if one does not know him in this very life, a great harm would accrue.

Out the four verses in this *Upanishad*, the first two are in verse and deal with mystical nature of the Lord and the remaining two in prose deal with the ways to approach the Lord for deliverance, where we find gods, eager to know *Brahman*, but not being able to recognize Him, when he presented Himself before them, emphasizing that not the gross but the subtle faculty alone reveals the true

nature of *Brahman*. Therefore, *Indra* is considered as the presiding deity over mind that alone is successful in knowing *Brahman*, when he reveals himself to him enlightening him of the mystical significance of *Brahman*, saying that it is He who moves the faculties of human being in seeing, hearing, thinking etc. In that effort, austerities, self-control and performance of ordained actions become the foundation. This is what this Upanishad imparts.

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### *Kena Upanishad*

शान्ति मंत्रः

ॐ सह नावतु | सह नौ भुनक्तु | सह वीर्यं करवावहै तेजसि नावधीतमस्तु | मा विद्विषावहै ||  
ॐ आप्यायन्तु ममाङ्गानि वाक् प्राणश्चक्षुः श्रोत्रमथो बलमिन्द्रियाणि च सर्वाणि |  
सर्वं ब्रह्मोपनिषदं माऽहं ब्रह्म निराकुर्यां मा मा ब्रह्म निराकरोदनिराकरणमस्त्वनिराकरणं मेऽस्तु |  
तदात्मनि निरते य उपनिषत्सु धर्मास्ते मयि सन्तु ते मयि सन्तु ||  
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

### *Hymn of Peace:*

*Aum! May He protect us both. May He nurture us both. May we both perform together. May we both succeed. May we never be unfriendly to one another. Let my limbs be perfect ; let my speech, my breath and my hearing and also the strength of my senses. May the mysticism of Brahman and mystery o the Upanishads be mine. Let me not abandon wisdom of the Upanishads ; let not Upanishads abandon me. Let there be no breach of that Wisdom by my self. Ever reposing my self in the Upanishads, let Dharma be my auspicious guide, yes my auspicious guide. Aum ! Let there be peace on earth; let there be peace in space; let there be peace in heavens.*

### *Madhva's salutations :*

“हरिः ॐ | अनन्तगुणपूर्णत्वाद्गम्याय सुरैरपि | सर्वेष्टदात्रे देवानां नमो नारायणाय ते ||

*Aum Hari ! To Him, though endowed with immeasurable attributes, is incomprehensible even to the gods, though he has granted them all their aspirations, to That Sriman Narayana are by obeisance.*

## *The First Chapter*

॥ प्रथम खण्डः ॥

### *Upanishad*

ॐकेनेषितं पतति प्रेषितं मनः केन प्राणः प्रथमः प्रैति युक्तः | केनेषितां वाचमिमां वदन्ति चक्षुः श्रोत्रं क उ देवो  
युनक्ति ॥ १ ॥

By whom energized does the Mind move towards the objects (of senses) ? By whom ordained does the Breath, the first (among the gods) move ? By whom desired does the speech is here spoken ? By whom, verily, are the gods presiding over the eyes and ears promote ?

श्रोत्रस्य श्रोत्रं मनसो मनो यद् वाचो ह वाचं स उ प्राणस्य प्राणः | चक्षुषश्चक्षुरतिमुच्य धीराः प्रेत्यास्माल्लोकादमृता  
भवन्ति ॥ २ ॥

Renouncing attachment to hearing by the ear, thoughts of the mind, speech of the tongue, breathing of the Primal Breath, sight of the eye, wise one on departure from this primordial world, becomes immortal.

न तत्र चक्षुर्गच्छति न वाग्गच्छति नो मनः | न विद्मो न विजानीमो यथैतनुशिष्यात् ॥ ३ ॥

The sight does not go there, nor the speech nor the mind; we know not nor do we understand how can this be explained.

अन्यदेव तद्विदितादथो अविदितादधि | इति शुश्रुम पूर्वेषां ये नस्तद्वाचचक्षिरे ॥ ४ ॥

This is other than what we know and higher than the unknown. Thus we have heard from the ancient ones, who have explained this to us.

This is other than what we know and higher than the unknown. Thus we have heard from the ancient ones, who have explained this to us.

यद्वाचाऽनभ्युदितं येन वाग्भ्युद्यते | तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ५ ॥

That which is not expressed by speech, but by which speech comes to be spoken, That, verily, is Brahman, know you thus, and not the one which people here adore.

यन्मनसा न मनुते येनहुर्मनो मतम् | तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते || ६ ||

That which is not thought by mind, but that by which thoughts come to be expressed, That, verily, is Brahman, know you thus, and not the one which people here adore.

यच्चक्षुषा न पश्यति येन चक्षुषि पश्यति | तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते || ७ ||

That which is not seen by eyes, but that by which sight comes to be experienced, That, verily, is Brahman, know you thus, and not the one which people here adore.

यच्छ्रोत्रेण न शृणोति येन श्रोत्रमिदं श्रुतम् | तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते || ८ ||

That which is not heard by the ears, but that by which hearing comes to be experienced, That, verily, is Brahman, know you thus, and not the one which people here adore.

यत् प्राणेन न प्राणिति येन प्राणः प्रणीयते | तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते || ९ ||

That which is not breathed by breath, but that by which life here breathes, That, verily, is Brahman, know you thus, and not the one which people here adore.

### ***Bhashya :***

“वैजयन्ते समासीनमेकान्ते चतुराननम् | विष्णोर्विविदिषुस्तत्त्वं पर्यपृच्छत् सदाशिवः | यदिदं पुरुषावश्यं तत्र तत्र पतेन्मनः | केन तत् प्रेरितं याति प्राणः सर्वोत्तमस्तथा | चक्षुः श्रोत्रं तथा वाचं को देवो विनियोजयेत् | इति पृष्टस्तदा ब्रह्म प्राह देवमुपापतीम् | ध्यात्वा नारायणं देवं सर्वाधारमनूपमम् | सर्वज्ञं सर्वशक्तिं च सर्वदोषविवर्जितम् ||” - Thus, sitting in his abode, *Vaijayanti*, the four-faced *Brahma* extolled comprehensively in seclusion the greatness of the *Sri Vishnu* to *Sadashiva* (the ever auspicious one). On being asked how does the human mind, though under control, repeatedly succumbs to attraction (towards sensory objects)? By whom energized does the *Primal Breath* move? Which divinity does preside over the eyes, ears, and the speech? Thus inquired, *Brahma* answered the divine Lord of goddess *Uma*.

“यः प्राणस्य प्रणेता च चक्षुरादेश्च सर्वशः | अगम्यः सर्वदेवैश्च परिपूर्णत्वहेतुतः | प्राणादिनां प्रणेता च सर्ववेत्ता च सर्वशः | सर्वोत्तमश्च सर्वत्र स विष्णुरिति धार्यताम् ||” - Mediating on divine

*Narayana*, the omniscient, all-powerful, free of any infirmities, who as breath of the *Primal Breath* and energizer of sight and all the rest, impenetrable, comprehensive goal of the gods, energizer of the *Primal Breath*, and knower of all the essentials, best among all, in all sides He is known, verily, as *Vishnu* Himself.

***Further Explanation:***

In the beginning, *the Prime Existence* was alone *unmanifest* abiding with its own self *Impulse*. *Creation* commences with the *unmanifest the Prime Existence* becomes manifest in नाम and रूप, the self *Impulse*, the potency becoming potential. *Creation* is movement in *Time*, giving birth to experiences, experiences giving birth to thoughts, aggregation of thoughts in mind giving birth to संसार – the primordial empirical world, where individual *Will* gathers things, possessions and positions as preferring them as good and bad, beautiful and ugly, pleasant and unpleasant, noble and ignoble, auspicious and inauspicious, therefore *Preferable* (श्रेय) or *Pleasant* (प्रेय). When the dualities cease, thoughts cease in mind, thoughts ceasing the experience cease, experiences ceasing the *Time* ceases, *Time* ceasing the movement cease, movement ceasing the mind becomes open and receptive to receive the resonance of the *Primal Sound*, ॐ, *the Prime Existence* which *Brihad Aranyak Up (III.viii.8)* says is ‘अस्थूलं, अणु, अह्रस्वं, अदीर्घं, अलोहितं, अस्नेहं, अच्छाद्यं, अश्रोत्रं, अवायु, अनाकाशं, असङ्गं, अरसं, अगन्धं, अचक्षुं, अश्रोत्रं, अवाक्, अमनः, अतेजस्कं, अप्राणं, अमुग्धं, अमात्रं, अनन्तरं, अबाह्यं, न तदश्नाति, किञ्चन न तदश्नाति कश्चन ||’, therefore even men of *Wisdom* hesitate to designate saying नेति, नेति, *not this, not this, not like any thing like that is perceived here in the primordial world*.

Since *the Prime Existence* is other than what the people here in *सम्सारा* worship, a question is asked by the seeker in *Maitri Up*. -‘अग्निर् वायुर् आदित्यः कालो यः प्राणोन्नम् ब्रह्मा रूद्रो विष्णुर् इति एकेन्यं अभिधायन्ति एकेन्यम् | कतमो यः सोऽस्माकं ब्रूहिहि ||’- Fire, air, sun, time, breath, food, *Brahma*, *Rudra*, *Vishnu*, some meditate upon one, some upon other. To which the Teacher replies, ‘ब्रह्मणो वा वैता अग्रस्यास्तनवः, परस्यामृतस्य शरीरस्य . . या वाऽस्य अग्न्या स्तनवस्ता अभिध्यायेद् अर्चयन् निःनुयाच्च | अतास्ताभिः सहैर्वोपरि उपरि लोकेषु चरति | अथ कृत्स्नक्षय एकत्वं एति पुरुषस्य पुरुषस्य ||’ - the different gods are but the principal forms of *the Supreme*, immortal and bodiless *Brahman*. Verily, on these one meditates upon, worships and discards. With these, one moves higher and higher in the worlds and when all this cease to be, he attains unity with the *Purusha*, yes with the *Purusha*.

Though *Madhva* appears to have accepted the anthropomorphic form of *Sri Vishnu* as the representative form of the immortal and bodiless *Brahman*. *the Supreme Prime Existence* even as *Bhagavat Purana* describes his form as one with earth representing his feet, heaven the head, space as his navel, sun as his eye, air

as his nostrils, quarters as his ears, *Prajapati* as his arms, moon as his mind and *Yama* as his eyebrows, modesty as his upper and greed as his lower lip, moon light as his teeth, माया as his smile, trees as the hair on his body, clouds the locks on his forehead, कौस्तुभ, the resplendent cluster of gems around his neck representing the aggregate जीवs, as diffused energy centres ; श्रीवत्स the curly hair on his breast suggesting playful प्रकृति ; गदा, the mace representing the principle महत् ; शंख, the conch is the luminous individuality (सात्विक अहंकार) ; धनुष् the bow suggesting the obscure individuality (तामसिक अहंकार) ; खड्ग, the sword suggesting awareness (ज्ञान) ; चक्र, the discus representing Mind (मानस) ; बाण, the arrows standing for the senses (इन्द्रिय) ; वैजयन्ति, the garland representing the elements. He was careful to mention that since he is not born as human beings are born -“स्त्रीपुंसामलैभियोगत्वा देहो विष्णोर्नजायते |, but represents the immutable divine essence – “किन्तु निदोषाच्चैतन्यसुखनित्यं स्वाकां तनूं ||” how could such one have human emotions like sorrow, when He is singularly of the form of eternal Bliss -“क्व वर्णादि क्व च ज्ञानं स्वतन्त्राचिन्त्यसद्गणैः | कुतो दुःखं स्वतन्त्रस्य नित्यानन्दैकरूपिणः ||”. *Vishnu* is “विशति इति विश्वं ब्रह्म |” and “वेवेष्टि व्यपनोतीति विष्णु” difficult for those to fix their thoughts on the un-manifest form, since the goal is hard to reach for the embodied beings,

*इति तलवाकारोपनिषद् भाष्ये प्रथमाध्यायः*

***Thus ends the First tion of the First Chapter of Talavakaropnishad.***

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***The Second Chapter.***

|| द्वितीय खण्डः ||

***Upanishad***

यदि मन्यसे सुवेदेति दभ्रमेवापि नूनं त्वं वेत्थ ब्रह्मणो रूपम् |  
यदस्य त्वं यदस्य देवोवथ नु मीमांस्यमेव ते मन्ये विदितम् || १ ||

If you think that you know Him well, you know, indeed, only little of the form of the Brahman. If you think with due deliberation of this form even among the divinities then only by you He will be known.

नाहं मन्ये सुवेदेति नो न वेदेति वेद च | यो नस्तद्वेद तद्वेद नो न वेदेति वेद च || २ ||

I do not think that I know Him well, though others consider that I know Him well. Whoever here says that he knows Him, verily, knows not; and he who says that he does not know Him, really knows.

यस्यामतं तस्य मतं यस्य न वेद सः | अविज्ञातं विजानतां विज्ञातमविजानताम् || ३ ||

By whom He is not known, to him He is known; but by him He is not known, who says He is known to him. He is not understood by him who says he understands Him; He is understood by him who says he does not understand Him.

प्रतिबोधविदितं मतममृतत्वं हि विन्दते | आत्मना विन्दते वीर्यं विद्यया विन्दतेऽमृतम् || ४ ||

Thus energized does He come to be known, realizing in accordance to His immortal state; thereafter, the self acquires the power and through wisdom, the immortal state.

इह चेदवेदीदथ सत्यमस्ति न चेदिहावेदीन्महति विनष्टिः | भूतेषु भूतेषु विचित्य धीराः प्रेत्यास्माल्लेकादमृता भवन्ति || ५ ||

If This is known here itself, then Satya – Prime Existence accordingly accrues to him; if This is not known here itself, then that will be a great loss to him. Observing Him in all beings, the wise man will be immortal after he casts of this world.

### **Bhashya :**

“न सम्यङ् नैव जानाति कश्चिन्निरवशेषतः | सर्वात्मना विजानामीति यस्य मतं भवेत् | तस्माज्जातः स भगवान्, यो नैवं मन्यते सदा | ज्ञातस्तस्य तथास्यैव निःशेषमननं कृतम् | इति यो मन्यते नास्य मतः स पुरुषोत्तमः | नाति वेद्यो न चावेद्यस्तस्मात् स परमेश्वरः | नेदं जीवस्वरूपं तद् ब्रह्म विष्णवाख्यमव्ययम् | किन्तु यत्ते समीपस्थममास ते विनियानकम् | तदेव ब्रह्म विद्धि त्वं विष्णव्याख्यं परमव्ययम् | नियामकं तद्देवानां मर्त्यानां किमोत्तमम् | तत्प्रसादं विना जीवे मन्तव्या न प्रवृत्तयः | किमु जीवस्य तद्भावो न मन्तव्य इतिर्यिते |” - One who presumes to know Him completely does not know Him either completely or comprehensively. By him alone is the Lord known, who never holds such presumption. Similarly one knows not Him, the *Supreme Being*, who presumes ‘*I have meditated on Him completely*’, but only by him who says that ‘*I have not known Him, whom I have meditated upon*’. He cannot be known comprehensively even in small measure. The form of *Jiva* is not comparable with that of *Brahman*, the immutable *Vishnu*. But the one who is closer to you, the energizer, He alone is *Brahman*. Know Him alone to be *Vishnu*, the imperishable *Supreme Being*. When he is said to be the energizer of the divinities (presiding over the forces of Nature)

he is also to be understood as the energizer of the human beings also. Without the *Grace* (of the Lord) the *Jivas* are even impelled towards Him. Why then be under the presumption that the *Jiva* could ever be *Brahman* ?

***Further Explanation:***

*Knowledge* is knowable. Awareness is *Wisdom*. *Maitri up* (VI.22) says that there are two *Brahmans* to be meditated – *Sound* and *non-Sound*. By *Sound* alone is the *non-Sound* is revealed. *Sound* is *Aum*, moving upward by that ascend to the *non-Sound*. This is the *Way*, immortality, complete deliverance and tranquility. Having passed by the various characteristics of *Sound* one becomes delivered in the supreme *non-Sound*, the unmanifest *Brahman* – ‘द्वे वा व ब्रह्मणि अभिध्येये शब्दश्चाब्दश्च, अथ शब्देनैवाशब्दं आविशिक्रयते, अथ तत्र ॐ इति शब्दोऽनेनर्ध्वं उक्त्वान्तोऽशब्दे निधानं एति, अथापैसा गतिर एतद् अमृतं, एतत् सायुज्यं, निर्वर्तत्वं तथा चेति . . तां पृथग्लक्षणं अतीतय परोऽशब्देऽव्यक्ते ब्रह्मणि अष्टं गतः ॥’. Know the *One*, the *non-Sound* closer to you, He alone is *Brahman*, *Vishnu*, the imperishable *Supreme Being*.

It is the universal declaration that one can not know the *Creator* or speak how all this came to be. The seer of the *Rigvedic hymn X.129* says in all humility it is doubtful whether the first origin of this creation knew whether he formed this creation at all or not, He verily knows or perhaps knows not. *S. Radhakrishnan* brings out to our attention an *upanishdic* text which *Shankara* makes reference in his commentary to *Brahma Sutras*, according to which when *Bashaki* was asked by *Bhava* to expound the nature of *Brahman*, he kept silent. When he was further persuaded to teach, the seer is said to have replied - *I am teaching but you don't understand, the Self is silence*. According to *Taoism*, *The Tao which can be spoken is not the eternal Tao*. When *Zen* was asked to speak about the *First Principle* he said the moment he speaks *That* would be the *Second Principle*, what is spoken becoming an echo and not the original *Sound*. What then one speaks would be *about Truth* and *not the Truth*. Therefore, *Philo* a western mystic, having decided to speak *Truth* and nothing but *Truth*, is said to have refused to speak about God, because what ever he speaks about God would not be *TRUTH*.

इति तलवाकारोपनिषद् भाष्ये द्वितीयध्यायः

***Thus ends the Second Chapter of Talavakaropnishad.***

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## Third Chapter

### तृतीय खण्ड

#### *Upanishad*

ब्रह्म ह देवेभ्यो विजिग्ये तस्य ह ब्रह्मणो विजये देवा अमहीयन्त |  
ते ऐक्षन्तास्माकमेवायं विजयोऽस्माकमेवायं महीमेति || १ ||

He is Brahman, thus he replied the divinities. It was, verily, in the victory of Brahman, that the gods became strong. (But) they considered ours verily is this victory ; ours, verily, is this greatness. This, Brahman was aware.

तद्वैषां विजज्ञौ तेभ्यो ह पादुर्वभूव तन्न व्यजानत किमिदं यक्षमिति || २ ||

In their presence, He appeared. They did not recognize who this strange appearance could be.

तेऽग्निमबुवन् जातवेद एतद् विजानीहि किमेतद्यक्षमिति तथोति || ३ ||

They spoke to *Agni, Jataveda* find out about what this strange appearance could be. He said, ‘So be it’.

तदभ्यद्रवत् तमभ्यवदत् कोऽसीत्यग्निर्वा अहमस्मीत्यब्रवीज्जातवेदा वा अहमस्मीति || ४ ||

Seeing him approach, it (*Yaksha*) inquired of him ‘Who are you ?’ ‘Verily I am *Agni*’ thus he said. ‘Verily I am *Jaatavedas*’.

तस्मिन्नस्त्वयि किं वीर्यमित्यपीदं सर्वं दहेयं यदिदं पृथिव्यामिति || ५ ||

(When asked by *Yaksha*) ‘What power is there in you ?’ (He said) ‘All this I can burn, whatever exists here on earth’.

तस्मै तृणं निदधावेतद्दहेति तदुपप्रेयाय सर्वजवेन तन्न शशाक दग्धुं स तत एव निववृत्ते नैतदशकं विज्ञातुं यदेतद्यक्षमिति || ६ ||

In front of him, (*Yaksha*) placed a blade of grass and said ‘Burn this’. He approached by all his strength, but was unable to burn it. Returning from there he remarked ‘I have not been able to find out who this *Yaksha* is !’

अथ वायुमबुवन् वायेद्वत् विहजानीहि किमेतद् यक्षमिति तथेति ॥ ७ ॥

Then *Vayu* was addressed thus, ‘O *Vayu* find out about what this strange appearance could be’. He said, ‘So be it’.

तदभ्यद्रवत् तमभ्यवदत् कोऽसीति वायुर्वा अहमस्मीत्यब्रवीन्मातरिश्वा वा अहास्मीति ॥ ८ ॥

Seeing him approach, (*Yaksha*) inquired of him ‘Who are you?’ ‘Verily, I am *Vayu*’ thus he said. ‘Verily, I am *Matarishva*’

तस्मिंस्त्वयि किं वीर्यमित्यपीदं सर्वमाददीय यदिदं पृथिव्यामिति ॥ ९ ॥

(When asked by *Yaksha*) ‘What power is there in you ?’ (He said) ‘All this I can blow off, whatever exists here on earth’.

तस्मै तृणं निदधावेतदादत्स्वेति तदुपप्रेयाय सर्वजवेन तन्न शशाकादातुं स तत् एव निववृते नैतदशकं विज्ञातुं यदेतद्यक्षमिति ॥ १० ॥

In front of him, (*Yaksha*) placed a blade of grass and said ‘Blow this’. He approached by all his strength, but was unable to blow it. Returning from there he remarked ‘I have not been able to find out who this *Yaksha* is !’

अथेन्द्रमबुवन् मघवन्नेतद् विजानीहि किमेतद्यक्षमिति तथेति तदभ्यद्रवत्तस्मात्तिरोदधे ॥ ११ ॥

Then they said to *Indra*, ‘O *Maghavan*, find out what this strange appearance could be’. He said, ‘So be it’. As he approached him, (*Yaksha*) disappeared from his sight.

स तस्मिन्नेवाकाशे श्रियमाजगाम बहुशोभमानामुमां हैमवतीं तां होवाच किमेतद्यक्षमिति ॥ १२ ॥

Then in that space there appeared a woman of exceptional beauty, *Uma*, the daughter of *Himavat*, whom he asked ‘Who is this strange appearance (*Yaksha*)?’

***Bhashya :***

“इत्यत्राऽख्यायिका वचि श्रुणु तां त्वं महेश्वर | स्थित्वा देवेषु तद्ब्रह्मव्यजयद् दैत्यदानवान् | देवेभ्योऽर्थाय विजयं तं देवा मेनिरे स्वकम् | आविष्टा असुरैस्तेषां प्रबोधाय जनार्दनः | यक्षरूपः प्रादुरभू दुमाशिवसमन्वितः | ब्रह्मणा चपि सहित एतेभ्योऽपि परो ह्यहम् | एतेऽपि मे भृत्यभूताः परिवार्या व्यवस्थिताः | इति ज्ञापयितुं विष्णुः सह तैरप्युपागतः || यूयमेतानपि ज्ञातुमशक्यताः किमु मामिति | तज्ञानार्थं हुताशश्च नासिक्यो वायुरेव च | इन्द्रश्च क्रमशो जग्युस्तं ज्ञातुं नैव चाशकन् | तदेन्द्रोऽधिकबुद्धित्वात् पृच्छतीति जनार्दनः | मत्तः शिवाद् ब्रह्मणश्च श्रोतुं नैवापि शक्तिमान् | इति ज्ञापयितुं तत्र नादृश्यत स केशवः | एषैव ज्ञानदाने ते योग्योमेति व्यदर्शयत् ||” - *Brahma* said, Here I will narrate a legend to you, O Great Lord. Established among *Devas*, *Brahman* won over *Daityas* and the *Danavas*. The *Devas* considered this victory to be their own, since their mind was obscured by demonic influences. *Janardana* appeared before them in the form of a *Yaksha* along with *Shiva* and *Brahma*, they being his followers and associates, intending to teach them that if these divinities could not understand him, how is it possible for them to comprehend Him ? To know Him *Agni* and *Vayu* approached Him, finally even *Indra* attempting to know. But none were capable to comprehend Him. *Indra* had greater intelligence and though he may ask questions, he was not yet qualified to know from *Vishnu*, *Shiva* or *Brahma*. Realizing thus, *Keshava* disappeared there and then from their sight. *Uma* being well-qualified to communicate such knowledge, she was made herself visible to them.

### **Further Clarifications:**

*Madhva* makes the *Prajapati* to expound the theses through allegory and a metaphor where *devas* on the one hand and *daityas* and *danavas* on the other represent the forces of *Light* and *Darkness*. His explanations here are based on traditional lore and legends than on metaphysic terms and foundations. Therefore, he refers *Vishnu*, *Shiva* and *Brahma* more in their anthropomorphic forms than as representing the abstract terms like *Luminous Wisdom*, *Auspicious Wisdom* and *Creative Wisdom*. The *devas* would then becoming the enlightened souls. Here the *devas* are to be understood as the deities presiding over different organs and *daityas* and *danavas* being the unenlightened ones who vitiate those organs. They struggle with each for superiority – ‘त एषु लोकेष्वस्पर्धन्त’ (*Brihad Aranyaka Up. I.ii.1*). The fact that *devas* could not comprehend *Brahman* was because every time they tried to recite *Udgitha*, the *daityas* and *danavas* would interfere and vitiate the organs of sense - or ‘तं हासुरा पापमना हेष विद्धः’ (*Chhandogya Up. I.ii.2*).

When it is said that *devas* could not comprehend the *Yaksha*, who in reality was none other than resplendent *Vishnu*, it suggests that the organs and not even the mind could comprehend, since they were all vitiated by the influences of unenlightened *daityas* and *danavas*. Therefore, there was the need for them to be

sensitive and receptive. Hence *Uma*, the embodiment of enlightenment, splendour, tranquility and pure Wisdom clarifies *Indra*, the presiding deity over Mind, being the principal organ and the first one to comprehend, shows that is the mind which has to be luminous and enlightened before the other organs could be luminous. Since *Indria* the presiding deity over mind, came to know that the mysterious *Yaksha* was none other than *Brahman*, he became great among all gods, even so mind over all other organs.

इति तलवाकारोपनिषद् भाष्ये त्रितीयाध्यायः

**Thus ends the Third Chapter of Talavakaropnishad.**

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### **The Fourth Chapter**

चतुर्थः खण्डः

**Upanishad:**

सा ब्रह्मेति होवाच ब्रह्मणो वा एतद्विजये महीयध्वमिति ततो हैव विदाञ्चकार ब्रह्मेति ॥ १ ॥

That is Brahman' thus did she reply. 'Of *Brahman*, verily, was this victory. By which the deities became great'. Thus, indeed, did he (*Indra*) realized that He was *Brahman*.

तस्माद्वा एते देवा अतितरामिवान्यान् देवान् यदग्निर्वायुरिन्द्रस्ते ह्येनन्नेदिष्टं पस्पर्शुस्ते ह्येनत् प्रथमो विदाञ्चकार ब्रह्मेति ॥ २ ॥

Thus, verily, did these gods, like *Agni*, *Vayu* and *Indra* excel other gods, having been touched first, they knew He to be *Brahman*. Because by *Indra* was He known as *Brahman*, *Indra* excels over other gods. Because he it was, who touched *Brahman* closely. He, it was, knew that He was *Brahman*.

तस्माद्वा इन्द्रोऽतितरामिवान्यान् देवान् स ह्येनन्नेदिष्टं पस्पर्श स ह्येनत् प्रथमो विदञ्चकार ब्रह्मेति ॥ ३ ॥

Because by *Indra* was He known as *Brahman*, *Indra* excels among all other gods. Because he it was, who touched *Brahman* closely, he it was who knew that He was *Brahman*.

### **BHashya :**

“उमा सा सम्यगाचष्ट तस्मै वृिणुं परं पदम् | यस्माद् ब्रह्मा व वायुश्च शेषविन्द्रौ शिवस्तथा | सभार्या गर्विणो नाऽसन् सुरेभ्यस्तेऽधिकास्ततः | इन्द्रस्तु प्रथमं ब्रह्म व्यजानात् तेन तूत्तमः | दक्षादिभ्यस्तथा कामस्तज्ञातुं पूर्वं मुक्तवान् | दक्षो बृहस्पतिश्चैव मनुः कामात्मजस्तथा | सूर्याचन्द्रमसौ धर्मो वरुणश्चोचुरोमिति | नासिक्यवायुरग्निश्च प्रथमं तदपश्यताम् | सर्वदेवाधिकास्तस्माद् एते देवाः प्रकर्तिताः | एतेभ्यश्चेन्द्रकामौ तु ताभ्यां ब्रह्मादयोऽधिकाः | एतेषामवमो वह्निः परमो विष्णुरुच्यते | अंतराले स्थितास्त्वन्ये ब्रह्माद्या पूर्वमीरिताः | अग्निः पश्चाद् व्यजनात् तदिन्द्रवाक्याद् ततोऽवमः | तस्माद् विष्णवभिसंबंधात् पारावर्यं सुरेष्विदम् ||” - *Uma* comprehensively instructed him (*Indra*) about the supreme abiding place of *Vishnu*, known to the liberated ones, like *Brahma*, *Vayu*, *Shesha Garuda*, *Shiva* and others along with their spouses (*energies*), since they all were not conceited. Since *Indra* was the first one to know, he was the foremost among all gods. *Kaama* was superior to *Daksha* and others having known earlier than they did. By *Kaama* were instructed *Daksha*, *Brihaspati*, *Manu* and likewise *Kama*'s own son. Later the *Surya*, *Chandrama*, *Yama*, and *Varuna* (were instructed), who uttered *Aum*. Breath in the nostrils and fire in here the first who saw Him. Therefore, of all gods, they are known as the superior ones; among them are *Indra* and *Kaama* and superior to them are *Brahma* and others. Among gods, *Agni* is lower than and *Vishnu* is superior. In between them exist all other gods like *Brahma* and others. *Agni* is said to be inferior because he came to know of *Brahman* from *Indra*. This is the gradation (*taratamya*) among the gods according to the order in which they knew *Vishnu*, fully or partially.

### **Further Explanation:**

Since it is accepted as *a priori* premise that *That One, the Prime Existence* alone existed with the *self-sense* reverberating within him, *Vishnu* came to be referred as *Brahman*, having become effulgent as *Creation* using लक्ष्मी, the self-sense or the potency to pervade the entire *Creation*, according to the attributes and inclination, fashioned by लक्ष्मी or *Prakriti*. Therefore, all the great gods *Brahma*, *Vayu*, *Shesha Garuda*, *Shiva* and others along with their spouses (*energies*) having been subject to *Creation* are also to *Destruction*. They were liberated ones having been enlightened to supremacy of *That One, the Prime Existence* or *Vishnu*.

According to *Madhva* every one who is born is हरेरनुचरा, made up of अनु - following or in furtherance of and चर traverse on the Path or *Dharma* laid down by *Vishnu*, he being ‘विष्णुर्गोपा अदाभ्यः ततो धर्मानि धारयन्’ one who maintain the path of righteousness. Human evolution does not depend in the circumstances in which he is born but on the attributes – गुण and attitude – स्वभाव in which he is born with. Therefore, neither birth nor opportunities would elevate a human being to a higher status, if he is not fundamentally receptive to noble thoughts, auspicious speech

and invigorating actions. जीवs are graded in three-fold division, देवास being the enlightened ones are qualified to be liberated, so are the superior among human beings, like *Brahma, Rudra, Vayu* and others like *Bhrigu, Ribhu, Vyasa, Prahlad, Narada, Dhruva* and others. मनुष्याs being enterprising beings and दानवास being the un-enlightened. मनुष्याs are the intermediates ones, capable of being creatively active, and subject to pure thought and noble ethical and moral actions. For the degraded दानवास the obscure worlds alone is the eternal dwelling place— ‘त्रिविधा जीवसंघास्तु देवमानुषदानवाः / यत्र देवो मुक्तियोग्या, मानुशेषुत्तमस्तथा // मध्यमा मानुशा येते सृष्टियोग्या सदैव ही / अधमा निरयैव दानवस्तु यमोलयः //’ . Thus some are born enlightened, some having potential to be enlightened and others doomed to be eternally un-enlightened, whatever the external form they might be born with.

*Madhva's* view of the three-fold gradations can be faulted but cannot be summarily dismissed. Human beings are not born equal, having inherent freedom to choose their own course, though born in good or prosperous families are inclined to obscure actions, having to respond according to the attributes – गुण and attitude – स्वभाव. *Krishna* describes this saying, ‘प्रकृतेः क्रियामणि गुणैः कर्मानि सर्वशः / अहंकारविमूढात्मा कर्तामहमिति मन्यते ||’ . Therefore, *Madhva's* view though can be faulted on many other counts cannot be rejected or overlooked entirely. *Krishna* having repeatedly said in *Bhagavad Gita* that ‘श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् | स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ||’ (III.35) and ‘स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते नरः |..श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् | स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् || सहजं कर्म कौन्तेय सदोमपि न त्यजेत् | सर्वारम्भा हि दोषेण धूमेनाग्निरिवावृताः ||’ (XVIII.45-49).

### ***Upanishad:***

तस्यैष आदेशो यदेतद्विद्युतो व्यद्युतदा३ इतिन्त्यमीमिषदा३ इत्यधिदैवम् || ४ ||

Of this (*Brahman*) these are the instructions, like lightning which flashes forth, as it were, or the winking of the eye. This instruction is concerning the gods.

अथाध्यात्मं यदेतद् गच्छतीव च मनोऽनेन चैतदुपस्मरत्यभीक्षणं सङ्कल्पः || ५ ||

Thus, concerning the *Self* that to which the mind appears to move and appears to remember and appears to imagine.

तद्ध तद्धनं नाम तद्धनमित्युपासितव्यं स य एतदेवं वेदाभि हैनं सर्वाणि भूतानि संवाञ्छति || ६ ||

*That One* is to be desired. That is to be meditated upon. Whoever knows him thus, Him all the creatures seek.

उपनिषदं भो ब्रूहीति | उक्ता त उपनिषद् | ब्राह्मीं वाव त उपनिषद्ब्रूमेति || ७ ||

O revered one, instruct me the *Upanishads*. ‘*Upanishad* is instructed to you.’  
‘*Upanishads* have been imparted to you’.

**Further Explanation:**

Teach me the (the secret Wisdom of the) *Upanishads*, having thus requested by Shiva, Brahma says “I have spoken to you (the secret Wisdom of the) *Upanishads*, the secret Wisdom of the) *Upanishads* is already communicated.

तस्यै तपो दमः कार्मेति प्रतिष्ठा ऽ वेदाः सर्वाङ्गानि सत्यमायतनम् || ८ ||

Verily, the austerities, restraint, performance of actions are the foundations, Vedas are the limbs and Satya is the abode.

यो ह वा एतानुपनिषदमेवं वेदापहत्य पाप्मानमनन्ते स्वर्गे लोके ज्येये प्रतितिष्ठति ज्येये प्रतितिष्ठति || ९ ||

Whoever knows this in this manner with all his demerits extinguished is firmly established in the heavens.

**Bhashya :**

“व्यदोयतद् विद्युदादीन् कपिलाख्यास्तु यो हरिः | अक्षोर्निमपषणं कृत्वा यः शेते क्षीरसागरेः || स एवैक परं ब्रह्मत्येवं तस्योपदेशनम् | अधिदैवे तथाऽध्यात्मे यं मनो गच्छतीव च | सम्यङ् न गच्छति क्वापि मने येन स्मरति | सोऽनिरुद्धाख्य ईशेशः परं ब्रह्मेति कीर्त्यते | स विष्णुस्तद्वनं नाम ततत्वाद् वननीयतः | एवमेनं तु यो वेद भवेत् सर्वैरपेक्षितः | विद्याकारं मनु ब्रूहीत्युक्तो ब्रह्माह तं पुनः | विद्यावेद्यं तव प्रोक्तमास्थानं ते वदाम्यहम् | तपोदमस्वधर्मेषु ये स्थितास्तेयु तिष्ठति | विद्यास्थानानि तस्यास्तु वेदा अङ्गानि निर्णयः | वैतामेवमग्निलं यो विष्णुतिष्ठति || इत्यादि ब्रह्मसारे || ” – What is communicated is the wisdom about *Sri Hari*, who shining like lightening bearing the name *Kapila* sleeps in the ocean of milk with eyes half-closed. He alone is the supreme Lord, *Brahman*, is verily the communicated wisdom, spoken in respect of the psychological and spiritual stages up to which mind has reaches out, where there is no access but the mind remembers, the wisdom of the supreme Lord known as *Aniruddha*, verily as *Brahman*. That lord though all-pervading is capable of being known, the one who knows this becomes on that account desirable to all. When the detailed enumeration of the Wisdom being requested *Prajapati Brahma* continues. ‘Now I will narrate to you the places where Wisdom is established - Austerities, restraint on senses and compliance of actions in accordance to one’s established righteous principles being the abiding places. *Vedopanshad* and the subsidiary scriptures are

the source of *Wisdom*. *Wisdom of the Vedas* is where the *Sri Vishnu* is comprehensively established, thus in *Brahmasara*..

“विद्युतः सूर्यादिप्रकाशान् आ समन्तात् व्युदुत्त प्रकाशयत् | यदादित्यगतं तेजो विद्धि जगद् भासयतेऽखिलम् | यच्छन्द्रमसि यच्चाग्नौ तत्तेजो विद्धि मामकम् | इति वचनात् | तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति | इति च | न्यमीमिषदा आ समन्तात् निमिलिताक्षमभवत् | स वै किलायं पुरुषः पुरातनो य एक असीदविशेषः आत्मनि | अग्रे गुणेभ्यो जगदात्मनीश्वरे निमीलितात्मा निशि सुप्तशक्तिषु || इति वचनात् | पूर्ण त्वाच्च आह | अभिक्षणं सङ्कल्प इति मनसो विशेषणम् | सङ्कल्पकामित्यर्थः | सप्रतिष्ठां सायतनामुपनिषदं ब्रूहित्युक्ते सम्यगेव मयोपनिषत्स्वरूपमुक्तम् | तत्र वक्तव्यं नास्ति | तपो दमः कर्म च विद्यायाः प्रतिष्ठा | तद्वस्तु विद्या प्रतितीष्ठतीत्यर्थः | सत्यमिति मिमांसा | निर्णयते यतः सम्यगिदं सत्यमिति स्फुटम् | श्रुतिस्मृत्युदितं सर्वं व्यक्तं मिमांसयैतया | सत्यमित्युच्यते तस्मान्मीमांसा ब्रह्मनिश्चया | इति शब्दनिर्णये || ऋग्यजुःसामाथर्वाख्याः पञ्चरात्रं च भारतम् | मूलरामायणं चैव पुराणं भागवत्परम् | वेदा इत्युच्यते सदाभिः शिक्षाद्यं स्मृतयास्तथा | अङ्गानि सत्यं मिमांसा ताद् विद्यायतनं त्रयम् | इति विद्यानिर्णये ||” – विद्युतः lightning means the splendor of the Sun, which spreading all around illumines the worlds. The splendor which is visible is the luminous Sun, which is observed in Moon and the fire that splendor know to have originated from Me, *Krishna* having thus said to *Arjuna*. Verily from His Luminosity does all thing become luminous, verily in His splendor all these appear splendorous, thus also having been said. | न्यमीमिषद means being consciously awake with eyes half closed. Prior to the *Time* when attributes like सत्त्व and others were yet to be manifest, the *One* who, as *the Prime Existence*, being independently the controller and supporter of the worlds, though consciously awake with eyes half closed appeared to be sleeping earlier was none other than the perennial Person, *Sri Krishna*, thus having been said. आः means in fullness, entirety. अभिक्षणं सङ्कल्प means with special mental, psychological attributes, understood in various ways. As refuge and source *Upanishad* be communicated, thus *Shiva* having inquired *Upanishad* as form of *the supreme Self* has already spoken with examples, thus was replied by *Brahma* and the remains nothing to be spoken. *Wisdom* abides in austerity, restraint over senses and performance of actions. The meaning is that the one in whom austerity etc is established in him *Wisdom* becomes firmly established. शत्य is what becomes clarified through commentaries. The scriptures which clarifies with full clarity those scriptures verily speak of *Brahman*, thus is spoken in *Shabdanirnaya*. *Rig* and other *vedic* scriptures, *Pancharatra*, *Mahabharata*, original *Ramayana* and the *puranas* these are verily spoken by the *Wise* ones as the true scriptures. Similarly, *Shiksha* and other subsidiary scriptures speak of the *Brahman*, these three are the abiding places of *Wisdom*, thus in *Vidyanirnaya*.

“यश्चिदानंदश्छक्तिसंपूर्णो भगवान् परः | नमोऽस्तु विष्णवे तस्मै प्रेयसे मे परमात्मने ||” – The one being endowed with wisdom, bliss and enlightened energy I bow down in obeisance the supreme self, Sri Vishnu, who is more dear to me.

इति तलवाकारोपनिषद् भाष्ये चतुर्थ अध्यायः

***Thus ends the Fourth Chapter of Talavakaropnishad.***

इति श्री आनन्दतीर्थ भगवत्पादाचार्य विरचितं तलवाकारोपनिषद् भाष्यं संपूर्णम् ||

***Thus ends the Commentary on Kena Upanishad by Anandteertha (Madhvacharya), the servant of the Resplendent Lord.***

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