

# The Sunlit Path



**Sri Aurobindo Chair of Integral Studies**

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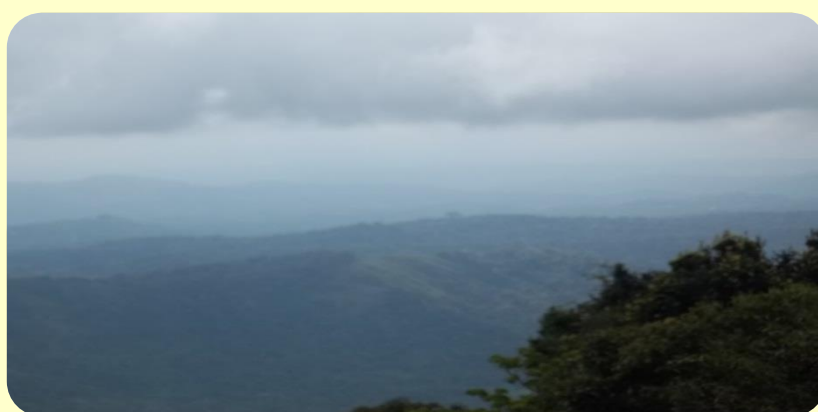
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**Editorial**

**My dear friends,**

**I am happy to bring to you the 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2016 issue of The Sunlit Path.**

**'Living Words' contain the first part of Kena Upanishad and initial remarks by Sri Aurobindo on it. 'Integral Education' describes three types of mental thought processes and their inherent limitations. 'Integral Health' provides a clear description of the subtle body.**

**I do hope that you will find the contents inspirational.**

**Sincerely yours,**

**Dr Bhalendu Vaishnav**

**15 April, 2016**



## Living Words

# Kena Upanishad

## Sri Aurobindo

### FIRST PART

1. By whom missioned falls the mind shot to its mark? By whom yoked moves the first life-breath forward on its paths? By whom impelled is this word that men speak? What god set eye and ear to their workings?
2. That which is hearing of our hearing, mind of our mind, speech of our speech, that too is life of our life-breath and sight of our sight. The wise are released beyond and they pass from this world and become immortal.
3. There sight travels not, nor speech, nor the mind. We know It not nor can distinguish how one should teach of It: for It is other than the known; It is there above the unknown. It is so we have heard from men of old who declared That to our understanding.
4. That which is unexpressed by the word, that by which the word is expressed, know That to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here.
5. That which thinks not by the mind,<sup>1</sup> that by which the mind is thought, know That to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here.
6. That which sees not with the eye,<sup>2</sup> that by which one sees the eye's seeings, know That to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here.
7. That which hears not with the ear,<sup>3</sup> that by which the ear's hearing is heard, know That to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here.
8. That which breathes not with the breath,<sup>4</sup> that by which the life-breath is led forward in its paths, know That to be the Brahman and not this which men follow after here.

1. Or, "that which one thinks not with the mind".
- 2 Or, "that which one sees not with the eye".
- 3 Or, "that which one hears not with the ear".
- 4 Or, "that which one breathes not (i.e. smells not) with the breath".

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## The Question. What Godhead?

MIND IS the principal agent of the lower or phenomenal consciousness; vital force or the life-breath, speech and the five senses of knowledge are the instruments of the mind. Prana, the life-force in the nervous system, is indeed the one main instrument of our mental consciousness; for it is that by which the mind receives the contacts of the physical world through the organs of knowledge, sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste, and reacts upon its object by speech and the other four organs of action; all these senses are dependent upon the nervous Life-force for their functioning. The Upanishad therefore begins by a query as to the final source or control of the activities of the Mind, Life-Force, Speech, Senses.

The question is, *kena*, by whom or what? In the ancient conception of the universe our material existence is formed from the five elemental states of Matter, the ethereal, aerial, fiery, liquid and solid; everything that has to do with our material existence is called the elemental, *adhibhuta*. In this material there move non-material powers manifesting through the Mind-Force and Life-Force that work upon Matter, and these are called Gods or devas; everything that has to do with the working of the non-material in us is called *adhidaiva*, that which pertains to the Gods. But above the non-material powers, containing them, greater than they is the Self or Spirit, *atman*, and everything that has to do with this highest existence in us is called the spiritual, *adhyatma*. For the purpose of the Upanishads the *adhidaiva* is the subtle in us; it is that which is represented by Mind and Life as opposed to gross Matter; for in Mind and Life we have the characteristic action of the Gods.

The Upanishad is not concerned with the elemental, the *adhibhuta*; it is concerned with the relation between the subtle existence and the spiritual, the *adhidaiva* and *adhyatma*. But the Mind, the Life, the speech, the senses are governed by cosmic powers, by Gods, by Indra, Vayu, Agni. Are these subtle cosmic powers the beginning of existence, the true movers of mind and life, or is there some superior unifying force, one in itself behind them all?

By whom or what is the mind missioned and sent on its errand so that it falls on its object like an arrow shot by a skillful archer at its predetermined mark, like a messenger, an envoy sent by his master to a fixed place for a fixed object? What is it within us or without us that sends forth the mind on its errand? What guides it to its object? (1)



## Thought Processes of the Mind

The normal thought-action of the mind may for this purpose be viewed as constituted of a triple motion.

- **Habitual thought mind**

First and lowest and most necessary to the mental being in the body is the habitual thought mind that founds its ideas upon the data given by the senses and by the surface experiences of the nervous and emotional being and on the customary notions formed by the education and the outward life and environment.

This habitual mind has two movements, one a kind of constant undercurrent of mechanically recurrent thought always repeating itself in the same round of physical, vital, emotional, practical and summarily intellectual notion and experience, the other more actively working upon all new experience that the mind is obliged to admit and reducing it to formulas of habitual thinking. The mentality of the average man is limited by this habitual mind and moves very imperfectly outside its circle.

- **Pragmatic idea mind**

A second grade of the thinking activity is the pragmatic idea mind that lifts itself above life and acts creatively as a mediator between the idea and the life-power, between truth of life and truth of the idea not yet manifested in life. It draws material from life and builds out of it and upon it creative ideas that become dynamic for farther life development: on the other side it receives new thought and mental experience from the mental plane or more fundamentally from the idea power of the Infinite and immediately turns it into mental idea force and a power for actual being and living. The whole turn of this pragmatic idea mind is towards

action and experience, inward as well as outward, the inward casting itself outward for the sake of a complete satisfaction of reality, the outward taken into the inward and returning upon it assimilated and changed for fresh formations. The thought is only or mainly interesting to the soul on this mental level as a means for a large range of action and experience.

- **Ideative mind**

A third gradation of thinking opens in us the pure ideative mind which lives disinterestedly in truth of the idea apart from any necessary dependence on its value for action and experience. It views the data of the senses and the superficial inner experience, but only to find the idea, the truth to which they bear witness and to reduce them into terms of knowledge. It observes the creative action of mind in life in the same way and for the same purpose. Its preoccupation is with knowledge, its whole object is to have the delight of ideation, the search for truth, the effort to know itself and the world and all that may lie behind its own action and the world action.

This ideative mind is the highest reach of the intellect acting for itself, characteristically, in its own power and for its own purpose.

It is difficult for the human mind to combine rightly and harmonise these three movements of the intelligence.

- The ordinary man lives mainly in the habitual, has a comparatively feeble action of the creative and pragmatic and experiences a great difficulty in using at all or entering into the movement of the pure ideative mentality.
- The creative pragmatic mind is commonly too much occupied with its own motion to move freely and disinterestedly in the atmosphere of pure ideative order and on the other hand has often an insufficient grasp on the actualities imposed by the habitual mentality and the obstacles it imposes as also on other movements of pragmatic thought and action than that which it is itself interested in building.
- The pure ideative mentality tends to construct abstract and arbitrary systems of truth, intellectual sections and ideative



edifices, and either misses the pragmatic movement necessary to life and lives only or mainly in ideas, or cannot act with sufficient power and directness in the life field and is in danger of being divorced from or weak in the world of the practical and habitual mentality. An accommodation of some kind is made, but the tyranny of the predominant tendency interferes with the wholeness and unity of the thinking being.

Mind fails to be assured master even of its own totality, because the secret of that totality lies beyond it in the free unity of the self, free and therefore capable of an infinite multiplicity and diversity, and in the supramental power that can alone bring out in a natural perfection the organic multiple movement of the self's unity.

**The supermind in its completeness reverses the whole order of the mind's thinking. It lives not in the phenomenal, but in the essential, in the self, and sees all as being of the self and its power and form and movement, and all the thought and the process of the thought in the supermind must also be of that character. All its fundamental ideation is a rendering of the spiritual knowledge that acts by identity with all being and of the supramental vision. (2)**



## Integral Health



### The Subtle Body

#### The Mother

To whatever cause an illness may be due, material or mental, external or internal, it must, before it can affect the physical body, touch another layer of the being that surrounds and protects it. This subtler layer is called in different teachings by various names,—the etheric body, the nervous envelope. It is a subtle body and yet almost visible. In density something like the vibrations that you see around a very hot and steaming object, it emanates from the physical body and closely covers it. All communications with the exterior world are made through this medium, and it is this that must be invaded and penetrated first before the body can be affected. If this envelope is absolutely strong and intact, you can go into places infested with the worst of diseases, even plague and cholera, and remain quite immune. It is a perfect protection against all possible attacks of illness, so long as it is whole and entire, thoroughly consistent in its composition, its elements in faultless balance. This body is built up, on the one side, of a material basis, but rather of material conditions than of physical matter, on the other, of the vibrations of our psychological states. Peace and equanimity and

confidence, faith in health, undisturbed repose and cheerfulness and bright gladness constitute this element in it and give it strength and substance. It is a very sensitive medium with facile and quick reactions; it readily takes in all kinds of suggestions and these can rapidly change and almost remould its condition. A bad suggestion acts very strongly upon it; a good suggestion operates in the contrary sense with the same force. Depression and discouragement have a very adverse effect; they cut out holes in it, as it were, in its very stuff, render it weak and unresisting and open to hostile attacks an easy passage. (3)

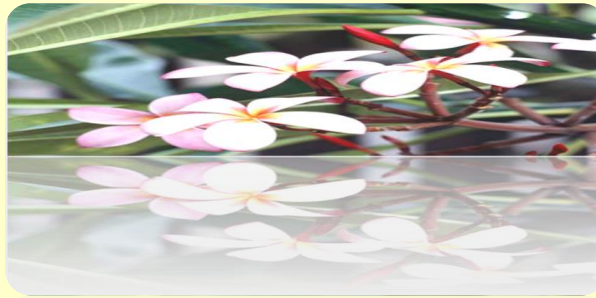
### *Companion for All*

THE ONLY really important thing modern science has discovered  
is that from the purely outer and physical point of view  
things are not what they seem to be.

### **The Mother**



## Acknowledgements



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1. Sri Aurobindo, Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo, CWSA; 18, 5-6, 18-19
2. Sri Aurobindo, Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo, CWSA; 24, 842-44
3. The Mother, Collected Works of The Mother, CWM; 3, 89

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