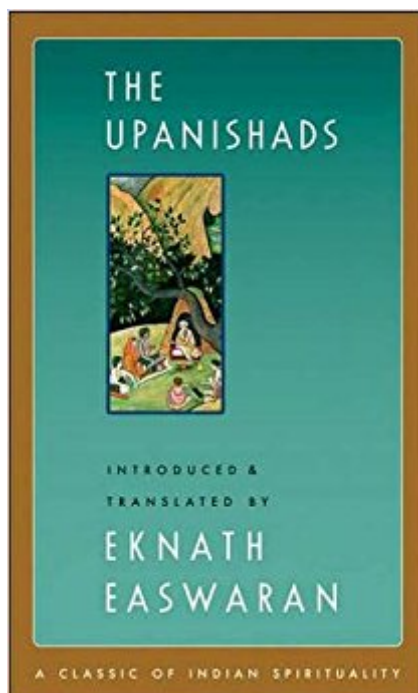


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# The Upanishads: A Classic Of Indian Spirituality



## Synopsis

In the ancient wisdom texts called the Upanishads, illumined sages share flashes of insight, the results of their investigation into consciousness itself. In extraordinary visions, they have direct experience of a transcendent Reality which is the essence, or Self, of each created being. They teach that each of us, each Self, is eternal, deathless, one with the power that created the universe.

Easwaran's best-selling translation is reliable and readable. It includes an overview of the cultural and historical setting, with chapter introductions, notes, and a Sanskrit glossary. But it is Easwaran's understanding of the wisdom of the Upanishads that makes this edition truly outstanding. Each sage, each Upanishad, appeals in a different way to the reader's head and heart. In the end, Easwaran writes, "The Upanishads are part of India's precious legacy, not just to Hinduism but to humanity, and in that spirit they are offered here."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Formerly a professor of Victorian literature, Eknath Easwaran discovered the treasures of wisdom in his own native India and began to pursue them with a passion. He has since studied them, practiced them, and moved to America to share them with the Western world. In his translation of The Upanishads, the font of Indian spirituality, Easwaran delights us with a readable rendition of one of the most difficult texts of all religious traditions. Each Upanishad is a lyrical statement about the deeper truths of mysticism, from the different levels of awareness to cultivations of love for God. There's one twist, though, for ultimately a devoted meditator realizes that God and the world are not

separate from oneself. Then the ultimate goal becomes to reunite with the universal Self, achieving the infinite joy that accompanies such union. Easwaran recruited Michael Nagler to contribute notes to the translation and a lengthy afterword, which together with introductions to each Upanishad, guide us expertly through this strange and fruitful landscape. --Brian Bruya --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"No one in modern times is more qualified - no, make that 'as qualified' - to translate the epochal Classics of Indian Spirituality than Eknath Easwaran." --Huston Smith, author of The Word's Religions

Eknath Easwaran's "The Upanishads" book is very elegant, beautiful, and easy to read. I like how he placed titles to every section and that he also wrote very small superscript numbers for every verse. From the front cover to the back one, it is a gorgeous book. It really invites/makes you read it all the time. For those who are very serious, however... The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is missing the entire chapter 1 (very important chapter), it starts on chapter 2. Then on chapter 3, verses 2 through 7 (very important too) are missing... this pattern keeps going with other Upanishads. Eknath was condensing the Upanishads to make it less repetitive (in a way I like it - abridge version) and many verses had missing parts/words/ideas/watered down (this repeats throughout the book and it is my biggest complaint). I understand "selecting portions" of some of the Upanishads, but it should be stated, and more importantly, the best parts should've been selected (per Upanishad). Here (Brihadaranyaka), the best parts were left out (a main issue), perhaps because another Upanishad touches on the same topic, but this is not mentioned or shown where. It is obvious that he was making a very westernize translation, omitting things that would turn away any western mind, as for example: being reborn in another planet (see below verse 3 of the Isha Upanishad). Our "scientific" society would laugh at this. Yet, I rather have it in the original context than to delude it. And still, Eknath managed to do a very good translation (my second favorite "most readable"). It would have been better if he gave the entire text of all the Upanishads and he did not condense (missing words or ideas) them so much, just a bit. Also, it would be much better if he gave the original Sanskrit text (for the serious student). When I bought the book, I was under the impression that not only it was beautiful (and it is), but that this one had the complete text (almost everyone else has them incomplete). The introduction before each of the Upanishads (the one some reviewers complain about) is written by Michael Nagler, not Eknath, and I do like it. This book also includes 4 minor Upanishads: Tejobindu, Atma, Amritabindu, and Paramahansa. I do like the way Eknath writes. His

style is pleasant, appealing, and easy, it keeps you interested. I absolutely like his other book "Essence of the Upanishads". Of all the translation I have read and own, the best one so far is "The Upanishads, Breath of The Eternal" by Swami Prabhavanada. This one is not as elegant/stylish looking on paper as Eknath's, but it is not missing important parts and the translation is soul touching... poetic... deep... for the most serious students. By the way, "The Upanishads: Breath of The Eternal" also includes only selected portions of the Taittiriya, Chandogya, and Brihadaranyaka. However, they do state it as such on the table of content, and more importantly, the best parts were selected and there is no deluding of anything, they rather added (to convey better the idea) than remove. Yes, another reviewer is right: there cannot be a literal translation of the Sanskrit text (see a Sanskrit sample below). It would not make sense at all. It has to be interpreted. But a good interpretation would not omit an idea, and in a text so deep like this, not leaving words/ideas out or "not watering them down" is critical... if we are serious about realizing these truths. At other places, Eknath's translation was literal, for example, most translate it as "All this is Brahma, all that is Brahma", but the original in Sanskrit actually says "All this is full, all that is full" and it is how Eknath has it. \*\*\*\*\*

Here is a quick comparison of Eknath's Isha Upanishad translation with other translators. Pay more attention to verse 3 on Eknath's translation where you can easily notice missing words/ideas, which leads to a different interpretation. Also, see how simple, yet beautiful, and direct is the translation by "The Upanishads: Breath of the Eternal": ORIGINAL - Sanskrit transliteration: kurvann eveha karmā, nācēcchatā, mācē samā, hācē evamācē tvayi nā, nyatheto'sti na karma lipyate nare Eknath (no original in Sanskrit in his book): Thus working may you live a hundred years. Thus alone will you work in real freedom. P. 57, verse 2A.C. Bhaktivedanta Srila Prabhupada (in his book, he provides the original in Sanskrit): One may aspire to live for hundreds of years if he continuously goes on working in that way, for that sort of work will not bind him to the law of karma. There is no alternative to this way for man. Sri Aurobindo (in his book, he provides the original in Sanskrit): Doing verily works in this world one should wish to live a hundred years. Thus it is in thee and not otherwise than this; action cleaves not to a man. "The Upanishads: Breath of the Eternal" by Swami Prabhavanada (no Sanskrit): WELL MAY HE BE CONTENT TO LIVE A HUNDRED YEARS WHO ACTS WITHOUT ATTACHMENT - WHO WORKS HIS WORKS WITH EARNESTNESS, BUT WITHOUT DESIRES, NOT YEARNING FOR ITS FRUITS - HE, AND HE

ALONE. ----- ORIGINAL: asurya nama te lokā, andhena tamasā, vrācētā, hācētā, mācē s te pretyā, bhigacchanti ye ke cā, tma-hano jānā, hācē Eknath: Those who denied the self are born again blind to the self, envelope in

darkness, utterly devoid of love for the Lord. P. 57, verse 3A.C. Bhaktivedanta Srila Prabhupada: The killer of the soul, whoever he may be, must enter into the planets known as the worlds of the faithless, full of darkness and ignorance. Sri Aurobindo: "Sunless are those worlds and enveloped in blind gloom where to all they in their passing hence resort who are slayers of their souls." The Upanishads: Breath of the Eternal: "WORLDS THERE ARE WITHOUT SUNS, COVERED UP WITH DARKNESS. TO THESE AFTER DEATH GO THE IGNORANT, SLAYERS OF THE SELF. ----- ORIGINAL: anejad ekam ĀĀ• manaso javiyo nainad devĀĀ• ĀĀ• pnuvan pĀ... ĀĀ• rvam arsaĀĀ• attad dhĀĀ• vato'nyĀĀ• n atyeti tisĀĀ• tĀĀ• hat tasminn apo mĀĀ• tarisvĀĀ• dadhĀĀ• ti Eknath: The Self is one. Ever still, the Self is swifter than thought, swifter than the senses. Though motionless, He outruns all pursuit. Without the Self, never could life exist. P. 57, verse 4A.C. Bhaktivedanta Srila Prabhupada: Although fixed in His abode, the Personality of Godhead is swifter than the mind and can overcome all others running. The powerful demigods cannot approach Him. Although in one place, He controls those who supply the air and rain. He surpasses all in excellence. Sri Aurobindo: One unmoving that is swifter than Mind, That the Gods reach not, for it progresses ever in front. That, standing, passes beyond others as they run. In That the Master of Life establishes the Waters." The Upanishads: Breath of the Eternal: "THE SELF IS ONE. UNMOVING, IT MOVES SWIFTER THAN THOUGHT. THE SENSES DO NOT OVERTAKE IT, FOR ALWAYS IT GOES BEFORE. REMAINING STILL, IT OUTSTRIPS ALL THAT RUN. WITHOUT THE SELF, THERE IS NO LIFE. \*\*\*\*\* Bottom line:

1. Missing important parts, 2. ideas are missing or have been diluted too much, or 3. changed. I returned the book, unfortunately. For a complete translation/interpretation (no Sanskrit or transliteration) of the main Upanishads get the F. Max Muller version & Swami Paramananda which can be freely obtained in PDF from "forgottenbooks" dot org. You might have to create a free account. I find their interpretations very accurate, and suited for advanced studies. Combine them with "Breath of the Eternal" and it is almost as reading the original in

Sanskrit. ----- UPDATE 2015-01-13: Forgotten Books has changed its membership. Now, most if not all books come with adds and missing a page after every eight page count (the free account), and if you want them with no adds and no missing pages then you must upgrade to the monthly fee membership.

Classic book of Indian spirituality. I just love Easwaran's translations! His versions of the Dhammapada and the Gita are my favorites. Especially the Gita. That is the best version of it I have read, and I have read many. This is a little hard to get into at first and I feel you have to be in the

right mindset to really get involved with it. But once you do it's a rather easy to read version. I bought it new from a third party seller and they did a great job. The book was in pristine condition, shipping was quick and the price could not be beat. Good job!

I get a peaceful feeling reading the story of Nachiketa, I'm gonna name my child Nachiketa, chiketa only if its a girl

great product

After researching for a book about the Upanishads, this one is easy to understand and follow. Its great to start study the upanishads.

Eknath Easwaran interpretation of the Upanishads is so comprehensive and deep. He very painstakingly shows how the Upanishads are really part of the perennial philosophy of all true and good paths to God.

Great interpretation of magnificent philosophy

perfect condition!

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