

## PODCAST 222, OMKAR, the Primordial Sound

Om Sri Sai Ram

Prasanthi Sandesh, 222nd episode.

There are many, many forms of Indian spiritual search and there are great differences between them all – with contradictions and great arguments.

For example, there are three main currents of Indian spiritual search: Jain, Buddhist and Hindu. There are great theoretical controversies between them because they are all so different. Hindus accept both God and the soul, while Jains accept only the soul, but not God. Buddhists accept neither God nor the soul.

These are very basic differences but one very interesting thing is their acceptance of AUM. All three are unanimously in agreement about Pranava or AUM. There's no argument at all. They argue about trivia and there is no accord amongst all of them. But there is no disagreement about this word AUM. It seems that this AUM is not something theoretical, it is something scientific

And not only in India, but also the three major religions outside India -- Judaism, Islam and Christianity, have no disagreement about AUM either, though they call it 'Amen'. That's the only difference. Otherwise the linguists say that AUM and Amen are one and the same. The difference is only because of the linguistic differences in expressing the sound of AUM.

So, this AUM is the only thing in the whole history of mankind where six important religions of the world are unanimously in agreement. They all agree that there is something significant in it.

What is this AUM? We can understand it in a few different ways. One - Man's mind is a collection of words. What else is there in your mind except words? If we take away all the words from your mind, you will not have a mind anymore. Your mind is almost like an onion. If we peel away all the layers, nothing will be left behind. Your mind is just layers of words. What will be left behind if we take away all the words? What will happen? It will certainly not be a mind any longer, but only emptiness -- not mind, just emptiness. Just imagine what mind can remain in you if there were no words left? What would remain?

The mind is just an accumulation of words. And it is with this mind that you do everything. Good or bad, joyous or suffering, material or spiritual, whatever you do, it is with this mind.

This AUM is not really a word. It is not right to call it a word because it has no meaning. It is a sound. A word is a sound which has meaning. However, AUM is a word which has no meaning, as it's just sound. But in this sound the essence of all basic sounds exists. Please kindly note this. In this sound, the essence of all basic sounds are contained. AUM, A U M. These are the three basic sounds.

As I said to you earlier, Indian wisdom is always aware of the number three. We know that Brahma, Vishnu, Maheswara, Shiva represent the three aspects of life; and according to physics, the electron, proton and neutron are the three basic elements of matter.

In the same way, A U M contains the three basic sounds of all languages, all speech, all words. All sound is a combination of these three sounds. These three basic sounds are all in AUM.

We can also say it in this way: From the point of view of sound, AUM is the atom. The electron, proton and neutron create the atom of matter. The atom that is created by AUM is the atom of consciousness. AUM is the atom of the mind, the most subtle atom. No atom is more subtle than this. Scientists say that if we split it, if we split the electron, the proton and the neutron, then the atom will disappear into nothingness. Nothing will be left behind. It will become formless.

But due to this very splitting a tremendous energy is released that we call that atomic fission. An atomic explosion is the release of a tremendous hidden energy that had been binding the electron, the neutron and the proton together.

We have seen it happen, by dropping only one atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Within five minutes one hundred and twenty thousand people were reduced to ash. It was the explosion of one tiny atom which is not even visible to the naked eye. That much energy is held in it because the three components are struck together, and the moment they become free, tremendous energy is released.

In exactly the same way, Indian wisdom has worked hard on the mind and ignored the matter. Indian wisdom did not focus on matter at all because it felt that to focus on matter would lead nowhere. It found that man gains nothing by focussing on matter. It is only an illusion that something is gained. You feel that there is some gain, but your hands always remain empty. So in India, matter was ignored. Instead they explored the mind. They felt, "Why not transform the mind which experiences all pleasure and pain, happiness and misery? Instead of accumulating things which create happiness or misery, why not transform the very mind that experiences the happiness or misery?"

This approach was developed in India only after much experience. They accumulated material things. They discovered that material things accumulate but they cease to give happiness. They observed that even by removing the causes of misery, misery does not end. While those causes are being removed, misery starts to come from something else. But it never really ends.

Finally they discovered that happiness or misery have nothing to do with material things directly. Material things function only as an excuse, a hook for happiness or misery.

When we go to our houses, we hang our clothes on a hook or, if there is no hook, then on to something else like a door or a window. But you will know you will have to hang the coat somewhere or other. The hook is not the essential thing. This is

why even if you break the hook or make it bigger, it will make no difference. Still the coat will be hung somehow, it will be hung somehow.

Indian wisdom has found that material things are only hooks and that the mind which hangs on to these hooks is like a coat. This is important. So, if the mind is miserable, it will become miserable on any hook. If the mind is a happy mind, then it will become happy with any hook. A peaceful mind will remain peaceful on any hook. A restless mind will remain restless on any hook. Hence, the question is not one of changing the hooks, but rather about transforming the mind.

So, people started working on the mind and the conclusion that they came to from their research on the mind revealed that *Pranava* or AUM is the atom of the mind. Can this atom of the mind also be exploded? If it can be exploded then this atom will also release enormous energy.

Can this atom of AUM explode? *Yoga*, the science of meditation, says, 'Yes, it can be exploded.' A fission takes place. If AUM disappears, then energy will be released like a fire being born from within, and that fire will burn the personality to ashes. The ego, the past actions, the sins, the virtues and all that the person has done during his past will be gone. See that, how wonderful an effect it is! This very fire will burn his whole load and his whole burden to ashes. That is what Omkar is!

Now the wise say that the conscience is the base *arani* or the wooden plank, and AUM is the top *arani*. This refers to two pieces of wood used for creating fire. So, the practice of creating friction by rubbing knowledge between AUM *arani* and conscience *arani* kindles the fire of knowledge. This fire burns away all bondage, thereby making one free.

Perhaps you have seen *arani*, the kindling wood. Just by rubbing two pieces of this wood together in the right way, fire was created in the ancient days. When the *Upanishad* was written this was the only way of making a fire. Either they rubbed flint together, which is a kind of stone or they rubbed *arani* together, which is a special kind of wood, and fire was created.

This is just a symbol. In this symbol the sage has called 'conscience' the base *arani* and AUM the top *arani*, and he says that the fire which is created by rubbing these two together will burn the person's whole past, all his actions and all his ignorance to ashes. He will become free, liberated. So, AUM is one of the *arani*.

And then the process of chanting AUM is also very special. But the first thing that we have to do is search for the real conscience because no fire can be created in your pseudo or so-called conscience. No, nothing can be created in that false conscience. It cannot become an *arani*. This is why conscience has been taken up earlier, in the earlier sessions. First, we must search for conscience and then for the inner sound of AUM.

You can chant AUM in three ways. One is loudly with your voice, which is the outer chanting. Then, you can close your mouth and not even use your tongue, chanting only in the mind. This is the chanting of a second and deeper level. It is in the middle. Then there is a third an innermost chanting when we use neither the mouth

nor the throat, nor the mind and the soundless sound of AUM just goes on resonating.

When this kind of chanting becomes possible, then the ultimate atomic state of AUM has become available. We now have the conscience as the base *arani* and the ultimate atomic state of AUM as the top *arani*. And so, the fire created from the friction between these two is called a fire of knowing.

First you have to practice AUM by chanting aloud with your voice. Then you close your mouth and chant AUM silently within the mind. How much time each person will need depends on their intensity. If the friction is intense, the third level will happen sooner. Your depth and your thirst will make it happen faster.

When the silent chanting becomes so natural that it continues no matter what you are doing, when it continues even when you have forgotten about it, that is when the third level happens. You are walking and the silent chanting continues. You are doing some work and it continues. Silent chanting continues. And then, you are eating your food and it continues. Slowly, you'll come to a state that even when you are talking the chanting will continue within you. It becomes spontaneous and it continues even when you are sleeping. When you wake up in the morning, the first thing that you will experience is this silent sound which has been with you during the whole night.

When Swami Ramathirtha returned from America, Sardar Poorna Singh went with him to the Himalayas. They were sleeping in the same room and one night in the middle of the night Poorna Singh was awakened by the chanting of 'Rama', 'Rama' in the room. He was puzzled. He wondered, "is Ramathirtha awake and chanting 'Rama', 'Rama'?" Sardar Poorna Singh went closer but Ramathirtha was asleep. Actually he was snoring, which meant that he was in deep sleep. But the chanting of 'Rama', 'Rama' was still there. He thought, 'Is there someone else in the house making this sound?' Afraid he went out of the house and looked all around with a torch. But as far as he could see there was nobody on the veranda or nearby.

But when he was out on the veranda he realised something. Yes, it became clear to him that the sound was indoors. But there was only one room. He looked under both the beds to see if there was someone else there. While he was looking under Ramathirtha's bed, the sound grew even louder. So he put his ear close to Ramathirtha's heart and found that the sound was emanating from there! Then he put his ear close to Ramathirtha's feet and found that sound was also coming from there! He put his ear close to his hand and found that sound was coming from there also!. It was arising from Ramathirtha's whole body!

Sardar Poorna Singh became even more afraid. He shook Ramathirtha, woke him up and asked him, "Sir, what is going on?" Ramathirtha said, "What is there to be startled or afraid about? This has been happening for a long time. I myself used to get startled and wonder whether it was coming from somebody else. But now it has become spontaneous. It goes on by itself continuously inside me. You must have been a little silent to be able to hear it. But now relax and go back to sleep."

And so, we play the role of a doer always and we have never been a listener. So we should learn to listen. Then, the atomic state of AUM will be attained. Then AUM will become an *arani*. Then the explosions of AUM due to its friction with the base *arani* of conscience will burn away all that is false in you.

After this you will never be the same as you were before. You'll have become a different person. It is a second birth. The old man has disappeared. This new man has nothing to do with the old. He discontinues with the old. The old man has gone! This is a new man! And unless this inner fire has been lit, a man will not become free from the bondage of the world.

The final thing is this: Existence has placed the key within you. Whenever you choose to use it, it will free you. If you don't use it, you are the only one who is responsible!

Thank you very much for your time. We'll meet in the next session.