

The Significance of The Mystic Syllable om

swami omkar

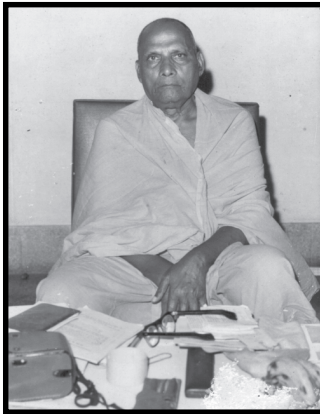


SRI SANTI ASHRAM

East Godavari Dt., A.P.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MYSTIC SYLLABLE OM

H.H. Swami Omkar



This small book is the gift offered
on the occasion of
Swamiji's 124th Birth Anniversary
on 21-1-2018

FOREWORD

The Significance of the Mystic Syllable OM by our Swamiji in the form of this short message contains the essence of all scriptures.

This booklet contains also two inspiring exercises for meditation. The photo print of the sacred syllable OM in Sanskrit is added as it will be helpful as an object of meditation, for all seekers of Truth. It is most uplifting and ennobling to identify ourselves with the sacred syllable OM and to feel that we are ceaselessly radiating and sending forth, rays of Light and Love towards the whole of humanity.

It is our request that the loving readers should read this message keeping their centre within, recognizing the presence in each and every sound for all sounds are the emanations of the one universal sound OM. May nothing but the mystic word OM vibrate both in the stillness of our hearts as well as in the activities of our busy lives, is my prayer.

Sister Sushila Devi

AUM

“The goal which all *Vedas* proclaim, which all penances declare and desiring, which lead to the life of *brahmacharya*—celibacy—I tell it to thee in brief—it is OM. This syllable is Brahman, this syllable is also the highest. Having known this syllable, whatever one desires, one gets that.”

-Katha Upanishad

“The sacred word OM is called the bow, the arrow, the soul and *Brahman* its aim. It should be pierced by him, whose attention does not waver. Then it will be of the same nature with him, as the arrow becomes one with the aim when it is pierced. Within the heart, where the arteries enter as the spokes do the nave of the wheel, He moves—becoming manifold. Meditate on Him—through the word OM. Let it abide with you, so that you may cross the ocean of ignorance.”

—Mundaka Upanishad

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MYSTIC SYLLABLE OM

Our daily worship in the Ashram begins with OM and ends in the prolonged chanting of the mystic word OM, followed by meditation. Many friends and visitors of the Ashram, have asked me to explain the significance of OM and I often gave them only the essence of it, promising always that I would write a comprehensive message on this sacred subject in our magazine Peace. Hence this is a theme that has been long ago promised to several friends.

Now, as I sit to write on the seventeenth day of my fast, meditating on the sacred syllable OM, I feel so incompetent to exhaustively explain this holy word; for the subject is so vast and sublime that it seems beyond the comprehension of my intellect as well as my mortal mind. I like to refer my loving readers to Swami Rama Tirtha's masterly addresses on this sacred syllable OM, to realize its complete significance. Hundreds and thousands of books have been written on this mystic word OM, from the beginning of the dawn of philosophy and from the day when religion began to be discussed. In the early hours of the dawn, nearly at 3 a.m., sitting all alone now, I feel so helpless and do not know where or how to begin my

subject. Hence, I silently murmur a prayer, to the creator of the word as well as the universe.

O Lord! I feel so helpless that I can do nothing by myself. As Thou art pervading the very cells of my being, pray, write this message for me, so that it may be helpful and inspiring to my fellow sisters and brothers—the readers of our magazine Peace. Thou art fulfilling even the unexpressed desires of the dumb and mute; so I beg you to listen to my prayer and bless me with Thy Spirit, Love and Strength, so as to allow this little self—the mortal to retire, so that Thy great Law may be fulfilled. Amen. ‘In the beginning was the word; and the word was with God; and the word was God.’ How striking and thrilling are these words about the word! It is needless to say that the word referred to above is no other than the mystic syllable OM.

You may say, why should it not be X or Z, Christ or Krishna, Buddha or Mohammed? Why should it be the sacred syllable Om alone? Because, Om is the most simple, natural and all-embracing sound that even the mute and the dumb can pronounce. It is a word used in every religion, in some form or other. It is a word expressed in every language. OM, Amen, Ahmin, all refer to the highest state of consciousness represented by Truth. Again when you repeat Rama, Krishna, Christ, Buddha or Mohammed, they

are only names and mere words; and you feel, in spite of all your veneration and worship towards; them, they are separate from you. They are not a part and parcel of yourself. They are outside of you. They cannot come from within, as the sacred syllable Om comes from the depths of your heart. Just try yourself by repeating the mystic syllable OM. It does not come from outside, because it is always within; it comes from the inner core of your heart or from the depths of your being. In repeating Om, there is no effort. One can repeat it without the least exertion, either without or within. Often it comes out of its own accord. Hence, we see children repeating it when they are happy. Even people in sickness and suffering repeat it unconsciously, as it gives them some relief. The repetition may not be exactly OM, but with a little variation it resembles AUM.

In the Song Celestial—the Immortal Gita, Lord Krishna says, those that meditate on the mystic syllable OM, forgetting everything else, will realize God in no time. Again, oft he repeated in the same book, those that leave the body, meditating on the sacred syllable OM, at the time of their physical death or demise, will reach only those blessed heights from where there is no more rebirth or return. Many people ask again, whether it should be OM or AUM. Both are the same. When A and U are pronounced together,

according to the rules of the Sanskrit grammar, they blend into O, hence it is often written as Om instead of as AUM.

If you notice by repeating A U M separately, you will be astonished to see how these three letters are covering the whole range of sound production, for A begins from the root of the tongue, from the lowest boundary of the origin of sound. U comes from the middle, the region near the palate and M comes from the extremity—the tip of the tongue. Thus the three letters A U M, in the mystic syllable are covering the whole range of sound production. Hence, it has been said, ‘By repeating the sacred syllable Om, one is repeating all the sacred books and scriptures in the whole world.’ It has been asserted also, that no *mantra* or sacred affirmation is efficacious and powerful, if it is not commenced with or followed by the repetition of Om, for it is the soul of all *mantras* and the goal of all meditations.

Om is the beginning, middle and end of not only the scriptures but of everything in the creation. The sacred scriptures—Vedas begin with Om and they are ended with OM. There is not a mantra, ritual or worship which is not connected, in some way or other with the sacred syllable Om; for it is the life and soul of all forms and names. Devoid of Om, every worship and meditation is a mere skeleton without life.

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Now let us consider what this OM is. It is the most important thing that we all should know. The letters A U M, in all the sacred books and by all the learned authors have been compared to the triple stages or aspects in the world such as :

A	U	M
Brahma	Vishnu	Siva
Father	Son	Holy Ghost
Past	Present	Future
Waking	Dreaming	Sleeping state
Body	Mind	Spirit
Harmony	Activity	Passivity
Life	Light	Love
Gross	Mental	Subtle body
Omnipresence	Omnipotence	Omniscience

Thus using a little intelligence, we can bring many more triple aspects of nature to add to the above.

If ever there is a universal name to the Almighty, a simple name that can be pronounced by the mute and the dumb, it is the sacred syllable OM. It is the sweetest word which even a child or a patient can repeat without the least effort. OM is not exactly a mere word. Yes, it is the word of God—the manifested and the highest

word of God. Through the word alone you can know God. If you know the mystic word Om, you will be able to know in a most natural way the mystery of God, for the mystic word leads you direct into the presence of the universal God.

In all the triple aspects mentioned above, let us take only one aspect to show how A U M are covering the whole of our life, in every plane. As already said, A represents the waking state, the gross world of phenomena; U represents the dreaming world, the world of imagination and fancy; and M represents the deep sleep state, the unknown world. The most important thing that one has to remember now is, about the fourth state, Which is beyond waking dreaming and sleeping conditions. And how is this super conscious condition represented by OM? As you repeat A U M, the sound resulting from the repetition of the mystic word, is leading us into the fourth state of cosmic consciousness. This is to be contemplated upon in stillness.

So when you repeat OM as you pass with AUM through waking, dreaming, sleeping conditions, at the

end of every repetition try to be still to recognize in silence, the marvellous effects or results in the fourth stage. The resultant sound of the repetition of AUM is leading us into the highest state of peace. It is a state to be meditated and understood in silence through intuition. OM is not a mere common word, but it is a mystic word. It is a powerful word with hidden strength or latent energy. It is the only life-giving and soul-awakening word. To realize its full benefits, it is to be repeated not only understanding its meaning but in a most rhythmical way and feeling the inspiration both within and without.

If you watch in the repetition of OM, you feel it is coming out from the very depths of your being. It is gushing from your very cells. It is a word that can never be separated from one's life. The most astounding fact is, whether you believe it or not, whether you know it or not, the mystic word Om is always expressing through you—not only through you but through every human being, nay, through every creature on the face of the earth. In your very breath, if you watch, there is the *Soham*, operating in you, day and night. In the *Soham*, the consonants represent the gross world and vowels

the Spirit or Truth. If the consonants are removed, there is OM in you, flowing in your very breath, unconsciously and ceaselessly proclaiming in every breath—

“I am the Truth. I am the Divinity. I am the Universal Breath. I am the One without a second. I am all in all—the Indwelling Presence of every heart as well as the whole creation.”

Behold! Recognize and be silent! OM! OM! OM!

The essence of this message so far is, that Om is the divine energy—the Interpenetrating Presence—as such it cannot be confined to any individual or religion. It is the Common Heritage of all the children of God—of the whole of Humanity. Consciously and unconsciously, it is the mystic syllable expressing through all our thoughts words and deeds. Infinite Peace, Eternal Poise and Limitless Power will be ours, when we can recognize its full significance consciously and attune ourselves, with the Holy Word, in every moment of our lives, both for our good and for the common good of the world.

In conclusion, before I end my message, I love to add here one of the most helpful illustrations given in the sacred scriptures and also mentioned in Swami Rama's works. It is called *Kalinga Mardana*—the killing of the snake. There was a snake living in a lake in the days of Krishna. It was so poisonous that everybody who went near the lake—even birds and animals—died instantaneously. So Krishna jumped into the lake and stood on its head consisting of a thousand hoods and began to dance, taking his flute and chanting the sacred syllable OM. And he did not stop the chanting of OM, until he completely crushed all the hoods of the snake. Thus he came out victorious, and lived as a benefactor of humanity.

Now this vicious snake is no other than our mind. Its thousand hoods are our numberless desires, cravings, passions, such as jealousy, spite, envy, anger, sorrow, conceit, arrogance, selfishness etc. These are hurting and doing harm to everyone who is coming near us—like the waters of the poisonous pond. So it is time for every one of us, to do what Krishna has done, to plunge ourselves into the lake of our beings and begin to chant the mystic word OM, crushing one

passion after another. The more we crush the more they rise. Yet, with persistent practice, we surely come out triumphant like Krishna, for he has set an example for us, to follow in his foot-steps.

This is not a mere story for enjoyment, but a practical exercise to overcome the evil with the help of the good and the virtuous and above all, with the holy vibrations of OM. It is also an uplifting thought to think that our bodies are the flutes and when we empty these bodies of all passions and thoughts of mine and thine, the Lord Himself sings through us, celestial songs of Peace, Harmony and Blessedness. Now coming to the most practical part of our message, let me share with you my meditations on Om, out of abundance of love for all of you.

MEDITATION

On the front page of this booklet you can see the photo print of the Sanskrit OM. Have a look at it concentratedly. Observe its self-shining splendour and its manifold brilliant rays, now close your eyes. Do

not think that Om is any longer outside of you. It is within you. You are that OM. Your body itself is the physical aspect of OM. From top to toe you are the OM figure. Feel that the middle curve is passing through your navel centre and the downward curve, through the lower region of your body and the upward curve, towards your head. Behold! There is the crescent on the top of your head. In the crescent, there is the Sun of suns, shining in full splendour. Identifying thus with the mystic word OM, meditate on its great significance which is Life, Light and Love.

You are to chant thus identifying yourself with the sacred syllable OM, first aloud with all the strength of your heart and soul. As you get absorbed within, chant only with lips; and finally inaudibly, feeling only its great significance. As you inhale you are taking in all the rays of the sun or Om, within yourself; as you exhale, you are giving out the rays of light, spreading and radiating them, far and near, all over the world with every breath. What a wonderful thought! Thus try to practise this meditation especially in the early hours of the dawn, facing the sun-rise and in the sunset hour, facing the retiring sun. As the rays merge in the sun, at

the time of dusk, let the world also merge in you, as you get absorbed into deep meditation. Om! Om! Om!

HIGHER MEDITATION

Meditate on the top of the head in the *sahasrara* centre—the thousand petalled lotus, where it is Infinite Light, within, without and all around. Here, there is either the repetition or chanting of OM. There is neither inhalation nor exhalation. In the Light of lights, in the beginning, in this highest centre, you feel only a little recurring pressure. As you merge deeper, even this sensation dissolves you will be nothing but thee. This is the significance of the mystic word OM, the Infinite, the Eternal, the Incomprehensible Splendour of millions of suns. OM! OM! OM!.

“In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.”

Dear loving readers of our magazine Peace! May you be that word and may you as that word, be with God, as that word itself is God. Above all may

you all be the living flames of the mystic syllable Om,
is my constant prayer.

Hari Om Tat Sat

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