The Unifying Power of "Aum"
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MINISTER'S MESSAGE

The Unifying Power of "Aum"

Use the ancient Vedic sound and outlook in practical programs to change the world

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Modern science has impacted mankind in a short span of time. Over-dependence on technology and scientific achievements have made the use of the body and brain less important, creating new problems. One is the vast inner emptiness that strikes at the heart of the individual and affects him psychologically. This mental imbalance is at the root of the world's problems and violence. We are living in a fear-orientated world. Not only do individuals distrust and fear individuals but nations also do the same. The arms race consumes money that could wipe out poverty, yet man has to realize that he has no other enemy but himself. Man has got to learn an important lesson of how to live with himself. There will have to be a convergence between the material and spiritual sciences, a marriage between the head and the heart, in order to experience the grandeur and beauty of the world and the riches it has to offer. For such a convergence, there is no firmer foundation than the sacred sound Aum.

Scientists theorize that this world emerged from sound--the "big bang." Our Hindu rishis many thousands of years earlier said the same thing--Aum is the primal sound from which everything has been created, sustained and transformed. Our Vedas say, "Aum is the imperishable syllable. Aum is the universe, and this is the exposition of Aum. The past, the present and the future, all that is, all that will be, is Aum. Likewise, all else that exists beyond the bounds of time, that too is Aum" (Mandukya Upanishad). This definition of Aum gives the idea that the universe is one indivisible whole. Everything is interdependent. Aum stands both for the psychic and material principles of life. This realization can save our world from the impending danger of dogmatism and materialism oriented by competition and the profit motive. This vision gives members of the Indic religions--Hindus, the Buddhists, the Jains and the Sikhs--a friendlier attitude toward nature and a less aggressive attitude generally. Their common heritage grew from a civilization that is basically tolerant of diverse views and an inclusive approach to the ultimate Goal or God. Their common name for God is Aum or Omkar. Aum represents this wholeness of approach. By meditating on Aum, different levels of our being, as they occur in our existence and are reflected in the universe, become integrated. This integration is necessary for us to experience the harmony of life as it exists in the world.

The effect of the sound of repeating Aum is known to have limitless psycho-therapeutic value, bringing inner peace and liberation from suffering. For millenniums Hindu sages have been repeating It and attaining transcendental states of realization, experiencing the oneness of life. Today we have no other choice if we want to save ourselves from self-destruction.

Begin with concentration to gather the disintegrated personality together. Focus on the transcendental Reality and merge the mind as an arrow with its object. In our Vedas, the Mandukya Upanishad advises: "Take up the great bow found in the Upanishads. Fix in it an arrow sharpened by constant meditation. Then draw the string with a mind absorbed in concentration. Hit, O good-looking one, the target that is the Immutable or Goal."

It is unfortunate that we are living in a violent world where people have become prisoners in their own home. It is important that those who believe in peace and mutual coexistence assert themselves in a positive way. It's time we awake and arise, otherwise the negative attitudes and behavior will continue to hold the world at ransom. The way to do this is to become united. We have to free our world from fear and poverty by sharing our resources and visions. We can do it. At the moment Hindus are not fully aware of this, and they think and live in isolation. The Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs who live in peace do not realize that they form more than one-fourth of the world's population. This vast section cannot be ignored if they are united. Today people in authority notice only those who shout or raise fists. The new millennium will be different. The silent majority is going to assert themselves in a peaceful way. They will be taken notice of because they will stand together. Unity with a strong moral basis is going to prove more powerful than the barrel of a gun. With the modern systems of communication we can establish the spirit of fraternity and friendship among thousands of temples, organizations and important individuals. What is necessary is to coordinate the tiny forces that are already there into a dynamic system to work for the good of humanity.

On the basis of Aum, we already have a formula acceptable to all, which is both creative and dynamic, to unify the collective consciousness of all who believe in peace and mutual co-existence. We of the London Sevashram Sangha are sponsoring a project to this end: "Aum Day 2000 Global Vision." We have contacted people in different countries, and the response has been very positive. Aum day will be filled with our sacred fire rites, chanting of Aum in the way of your tradition, a day of worship and culture either at the temple or just in your home--to bring about an awareness of oneness that will usher in a new era. The emphasis will be to manifest the humanity in man, to make him aware of his position in creation as a responsible being and not to lord over others. Join us to make the sound of Aum vibrate in the universe to bring about peace and harmony on January 1, 2000!

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