What are mantras?

Mantras are cosmic sounds, which were discovered in higher

states of meditation when yogis explored the different layers

of the mind to discover the source of existence. Normally, it

is difficult to go beyond the physical level in meditation.

With some effort one can contain the agitation of the vrittis,

waves of the mind, and go up to the mental and intellectual

levels. However, very few are able to access the dimension of

spirit. Yogis have gone to that level and experienced

luminosity, the eternal quality of the spirit. In that state,

vibrations are heard which the physical senses are incapable

of hearing.

Normally, one hears sounds only within a certain range

of decibels; beyond or below that range the frequencies

change and cannot be heard. However, in the causal state of

consciousness one becomes sensitized and begins to hear

and see many things. What one hears are mantras and what

**one sees are yantras.** If one simply makes up some syllables

and repeats them - that is not mantra. The mantras that the

yogis discovered were sounds vibrating at particular

frequencies in each dimension of the personality. They also

identified each sound with a particular psychic centre. The

mantra Om, for example, was identified as the seed sound of

ajna chakra, Ham of vishuddhi chakra, Yam of anahata chakra,

Ram of manipura chakra, Vam of swadhisthana chakra and

Lam of mooladhara chakra.

In their altered state of observation, the yogis perceived

that the chakras are stimulated by chanting a particular

sound. This is akin to the effect created when a long rope is

tied to a tree trunk and shaken: the wave travels from one

end of the rope to the other. Similarly, the ripples of vibration

reach and activate the psychic centre when the sound of a

frequency is repeated audibly or mentally. Therefore, the

yogis combined certain sounds in order to create a particular

state of consciousness. In this way mantras such as Om Namah

Shivaya, Om Namah Bhagavate Vasudevaya and others emerged.

Mantras became part of spiritual sadhana to awaken different

areas of consciousness and develop knowledge and creativity

in a particular area of consciousness.

Each mantra has two important qualities, known in

Sanskrit as varna and akshara. Varna means 'colour' and

akshara means 'letter' or 'form'. The letters of the Sanskrit

alphabet are akshara, which also means 'imperishable'. For

once a mantra is uttered, it becomes a part of the eternal

akashic record. Every mantra has six parts. First, it has a

rishi, who had self-realization through the mantra and gave

the mantra to others. Sage Vishwamitra, for example, is the

rishi for the Gayatri mantra. Second, every mantra has a

metre. Third, it has an ishta devata (presiding deity). Fourth,

it has a bija (seed), which is its essence. Fifth, it has its own

shakti, energy. Sixth, it has a kilaka (pin) which unplugs the

chaitanya (consciousness) hidden in the mantra. When the

plug is removed by constant and prolonged repetition, the

chaitanya is revealed.

Most people do not understand the power of mantras

and think they can use them in any preferred way. Some use

any word or name for their mantra. For example, one may

admire a great person and want to make a mantra out of his

or her name. One may think of that person as one's gum or

God and be filled with great emotional feelings and love for

him. One may like to repeat his name; however, that name is

merely a sound with an emotional charge, not a mantra

charged with prana shakti.

Initiation from a mantra guru is essential to realize the

power of a mantra. Recitation of a word or syllable that has

been heard or found in a book is not enough. A mantra

requires correct phonetic pronunciation, intonation, concen-

tration and creation of the associated mental image or form.

Its ishta, bija, shakti and kilaka are a matter of realization,

and only one who has realized these aspects can effectively

impart its power. Therefore emphasis is placed on initiation.

However, there are also universal mantras such as Om or

Gayatri, which can be used if one has not received a mantra

through initiation.

MANTRA

PURNAMADAH

PURNAMIDAM

PURNAT PURNAMUDACHYATE

PURNASYA PURNAMADAYA

PURNAMEVA VASHISHYATE

Mantrq Om Namaha Shivaya

Guru brahma guru Vishnu

Guru Devo Maheshwara

Guru Sakshat Param brahma

Tasmai Shri Gurave Nama

Le guru est brama, le Guru est Vishnu, le Guru est le Seigneur Maheshwara, le guru est en vérité la réalité suprême, sublimes prosternations à eux.

WHO IS A GURU?

If the teacher is brilliant they close up, they can’t take the light anymore. If

the teacher is interesting, funny, dark or stupid they open up wide—with the result that it seems to

be far easier to learn rubbish than to learn something worthwhile. If someone sits there and

discusses a hundred ways of robbing a bank it is interesting, there is not a dull moment, the pupil is

keenly interested in it. But if someone sits there and discusses Upanishadic wisdom not only the

pupils but the eyelids close.

“They who are devoted to ignorance go to hell. They who are

devoted to knowledge go to a greater hell.” How is that? If you are devoted to the image that has

been formed in you when the theory was imparted you are stuck forever, there is no way out of it.

The ‘Jijnasu’ (the curious) stage is over and you are creeping into the Jnani (the knowledge) stage

The Acharya merely put up a structure within and the student became aware of that structure.

“That light which removes the darkness of ignorance is the Guru.” He in whose presence

you gain this, is the Guru; or that is the Guru. That moment or that event where the scales of

ignorance drop away and this inner structure of theory (which has been put there by the instructions

of the Acharya) begins to grow and is realised—there is the Guru.

It is not discipline which is imposed upon you by others, it is not discipline which is goal

oriented, but it is a discipline born of intense search. When this discipline manifests itself in your

heart you will naturally find your Guru. You go and stand in front of someone and ... that’s it. You

don’t need to exchange a word.

. Information you can pass on, so the passing on of the information is the business of

the Acharya. Non-verbal communication of truth is by the Guru.