



## **Bharatheeya Samskruthi** >> **Atharva Vedic Upanishads – XXII**

### **Atharvasikha Upanishad**

This Upanishad is taught by Sage Atharva to great sages like Pippaladha, Angiras and Sanathkumara. It emphasizes the need and benefits of the meditation of the Pranava.

The sages Pippalada, Aangiras and Sanath Kumara approached the great God like sage, Atharva Maharshi and asked him, "Oh, God like sage, what is the chief aspect of meditation? What is the mantra (holy syllable) on which to meditate? Who can meditate? Who is the God of meditation?"

The sage Atharva replied to them, "Mainly meditation has to be done on the single letter Aum. It itself is the mantra for meditation. The four legs of that mantra are the four devas and the four Vedas. The letter has to be recognized as the Para Brahman (Ultimate reality) and meditated upon.

The first syllable Aa, indicates earth, the Rig Veda along with its holy chants, Brahma the creator, Ashta Vasus among devas, "Gayathri" among meters, and Garhaphya (the fire of the household) among fires.

The second syllable Uu denotes the ether, the Yajur Veda, Rudra who is the God of destruction, the eleven Rudras among devas, "Trishgup" among meters and dakshinagni (fire of the south - funeral pyre) among the fires.

The third syllable Ma indicates the heavens, Sama Veda with its musical sounds of Sama, Vishnu who looks after the worlds, the twelve Adithyas (suns) among devas, "jagathichanda" among meters and Ahavagni (the fire used in fire sacrifice) among the fires.

That half fourth syllable which is the hidden Ma, is the magical chants of Atharva Veda, Samvarthaka (the fire of exchange) fire among fires, marud Ganas among devas. It is the self glittering Brahman which shines alone and sees everything.

The first is the red Brahma (creative aspect), the second the holy white Rudra (destructive aspect), the third the black Lord Vishnu (the administrative aspect) and the fourth which is like lightning is the multi coloured Purushothama (best among males).

This Omkara has four legs and four heads (fires). The fourth is the half syllable sound of "Ma" which is hidden. That is pronounced in a small short form, slightly extended form (pluthyaga) and much extended form. It is pronounced as Aum with one mathra, Aum in two mathras and Aum in the extended three mathras (mathra is the unit of pronunciation).

The fourth peaceful half syllable is hidden in the long ended pronunciation. It is the incomparable glitter of the soul. It is that sound which was never there and which will be never there. If not pronounced earlier but pronounced for the first time it, takes one via the Sushumna Nadi to the lotus with thousand petals (Sahasrara).

The pranava (the sound of Aum) makes all the souls to bow before it. It is the one and only one which has to be meditated upon as the four Vedas and the birth place of all devas. One who meditates like that goes away from all sorrows and fears and gets the power to protect all others who approach him. It is because of this meditation only that Lord Vishnu who is spread everywhere, wins over all others. It is because Lord Brahma controlled all his organs and meditated upon it, he attained the position of the creator. Even Lord Vishnu, parks his mind in the sound (Aum) of the place of Paramathma (ultimate soul) and meditates upon Eeshana, who is most proper to be worshipped. All this is only proper in case of Eeshana.

Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra and Indra are creating all beings, all organs and all karanas. They are also capable of controlling them. But Lord Shiva exists in between them like sky and is permanently stable. It is advised that the five gods Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Ishwara and Shiva should be worshipped in the form of pranava [Aa + Uu + Ma + sound + Bindu (full stop)].

Even if for one second, if one can stay and meditate on these, he gets more results than that of performing one hundred fire sacrifices. With the full understanding and knowledge, one should only meditate on paramashiva, which would give rise to all benefits. It is definite that, by sacrificing all other things, the twice born, should learn and understand this and he would get rid of the suffering of living in the womb and attain salvation.

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