

Temple bells



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In every temple in the East different kinds of bells have been used since time immemorial. Over the years we have forgotten the significance behind the bells. More so they are used without any understanding and has become a part of the rituals. Often we hear people saying bells in the entrance of a temple are ringed to awaken the deity, God who dwells in the temple. On the contrary, says Osho, it is to awaken our sleeping mind.

“When you ring the bell of a temple - not half asleep but with alertness - that creates a discontinuity in your thoughts, a sort of break in the chain of your thoughts, and you become aware of a changed atmosphere. There is a similarity between the sound of the bell and the sound of “Aum”; in fact there is some inner relationship. The sound of the bell continues charging the temple all the day long and the sound of “Aum” also charges the temple with its vibrations.”

Temples are designed constructed in such a way that sound can reverberate inside whereas the temple is always absolutely empty. This signifies the ultimate state of a seeker; it is a symbol. Once the bell is ringed, a sound is created from nowhere and it echoes in the empty temple, then re-echoes before becoming silent and silent and finally disappearing in the vast existential ocean of silence. Osho says, “[No](#) one should enter the temple through that door of doors without ringing the bell, for only through the sound itself can you enter. The uniqueness of a bell is that it keeps resounding long after you ring it, so the resonance keeps sounding as you enter the main entrance. In that sound alone is the key to your entry into the temple.

Through the sound, as it were, you enter into God's abode. The temple is a symbol of God's dwelling. When it is sounding constantly you need not ring the bell, but we have formulated a method with the symbol. When you return from the temple ring the bell again. You have to journey [back](#) amidst the reverberating sound. All worship, all prayers start with the ringing of the bell.”

Sounds are not heard in the ears, they only do a transmission work. The ears choose and select the sounds that enter. The ears are not the center, one hears from somewhere deep down. The ears are simply transmitting selected sounds to the center. The center is not in the head though it appears to be in the head because we hear only words. With words the head is the center, with sounds it is not the center. The Japanese who have been experimenting with sound for a long time say that man thinks not through the head, but through the belly.

When the bell is ringed, it also helps the seeker who is meditating in the temple. It may seem like a constant disturbance because every visitor rings the bell and a sound is created. But the meditator actually waits for this sound because it helps him enter himself again and follow and look where this sound is moving deep, towards his center. Osho says that the sound always hits at the belly, at the navel, never in the head. If it hits in the head, it is not sound, it is word and once one starts to think about the sound then the purity is lost.

Osho says *"The bell in every temple in India or Tibet or [China](#) or Burma, is meaningful in the sense that it reminds you that if you can become as silent as the bell slowly becomes, after you have hit it - first it is all sound, then slowly the sound dies-then the soundlessness enters in. People hear only the sound; then they have not heard the bell. You should hear the other part too. When the sound is dying, disappearing, the soundless sound is appearing, coming in. When the sound has completely disappeared, there is utter soundlessness, and that is what meditation is."*

Religion is not a question of habit, routine, formality or practice. If it just remains a formality, a ritual practice to be followed, then it is useless. If a person can go to the temple alert, then the temple bells will have a totally different meaning and significance for him. Those temple bells will ring something within the heart and the silence of the church or temple will surround the person in a totally [new](#) way. Then one can read the message of God on every leaf, every flower. His signatures are everywhere. The Koran, the Bhagavad Geeta and the Bible are written all over existence. One only need penetrating eyes.

Ma Prem Naina

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