

### 37. *Bhajan as saadhana*

THE Scriptures lay down *Bhajan* (group devotional singing), *Naamasmaraan* (Remembering God's Name) and *Sankeerthan* (devotional music) as the *Saadhanas* (spiritual practices) of this Age. *Bhajan* is the process of singing your prayers to God, praising His glory and compassion, and pleading that He may fill you with His Grace. Dr. Hislop has as a result of many years of research, declared that prayer has a highly curative effect on the body and mind of man. That is the result of constant *Bhajan* and recital of the Name. Every Unit of the Organisation is enjoined to arrange for *Nagarasankeerthan* (moving choirs) to go around the streets, in the early hours of the day, *Bhajan* every evening and morning, for this very reason.

But, *Bhajan* should not be gone through, as a painful necessity; it has to be a thrilling experience, which must leave the participants full of pure energy and elevated enthusiasm. But, this does not happen now. Either it is too mechanical or it is a medium for some people to exhibit their talents. The *Bhajans* are sung to parade one's compositions and these are sung during the group sittings, as if they are rehearsed there. The others are not able to follow; so they allow their minds to wander. Sing familiar *Bhajans*, so that all can share in the *Aanandha*. Also, pay attention to the tune, the meaning, the variety, the voice, the *raaga*, the *thaal* (the tune and the beat) and other fine points of the *Bhajans*. If your voice is not pleasant or sweet, keep quiet; that is the best service you can do.

Do not cause discontent, discord and disharmony, insisting on singing, because you are an office-bearer, or something! The *Bhajans* must be sweet to the ear, arousing pictures of the glory and grandeur of Godhead, in the mind of the singers and listeners; they must refer to various Names and Forms of God, so that the *Bhajan* Sessions might fill every one with ecstasy. *Bhajan* is a *Saadhana* for all who share in it; that is why it is prescribed, for every Unit.

#### **Advice should come out of personal experience**

Youth is often found fault with by elders today, that they have lost reverence, humility, and piety that they ridicule temples, religious services and all signs of adoration or devotion directed towards God. They do not learn the art of meditation or sense-control, but cater to the most trivial whims, without regard to their harmful effects. All this is due to the hypocrisy of the elders. Those who teach them or preach to them about the rules of morality and religion, are patently breaking those very rules. They lead such atrociously wrong lives; but, they admonish, advise, and harangue, without the slightest twinge of conscience. This is easily discovered by the sharp-eyed young men and women. How then can they revere the parent or teacher, the elder or leader, the writer or the speaker, who sets about the task of 'educating' the rising generation? Let advice come out of personal experience; otherwise, keep mum! The very fact that you are happy and contented, while having faith in God, will induce others to develop faith; that is the best method of preaching.

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*You desire to drink a sweet drink, but instead of sugar, you drop salt into the cup, imagining salt to be sugar. That is the state of man, today. He craves for peace, but, does not know how to attain it.*

*The means he adopts do not lead him to the anticipated end. So, all the thirst and craving are just a pose; it is a fashionable slogan, and nothing more.*

*Man must be sincere; his word must be in conformity with his feeling; his action must be in conformity with his word. Resolve on this practice, at least from today. Do not be false to yourself*

*Sri Sathya Sai*