

Silver Jubilee of Bhakthaswaraa Bhajan Mandali's Inter-school Bhajan Competition



Bhaktha Swaraa Eduational & Social Trust in association with Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Madras, celebrated the 25th Year of the Mandali's Inter-School Bhajan competition on the 25th of July 2011 at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan auditorium, Madras. This Bhajan Mandali had been training school children in singing bhajans.

Pujya Swamiji was invited to preside over the function and deliver his *anugraha bhashanam*. Padma Bhushan Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam was invited to distribute prizes to the school children participating in the competition.

In his *anugraha bhāṣaṇam*, Pujya Swamiji said it was inspiring to listen to the singing of Bhajans by the well trained young people. He said all of them were exposed to global trends in music and dance and in the present days, sitting and singing did not go together. Nowadays the singers did not even stand in one place and sing and they cover the whole stage and sing. People in the villages sit and sing in praise of the Lord and it inspired every one.

Pujya Swamiji said: "Music is music whether it is modern or ancient, classical or folklore. Music is a manifestation of Īsvara.

Bhagavān is manifest in the form of this world. The first manifestation is ākasa and from it came śabda. Ākasa is the first element to come into being. In ākasa, śabda is manifest, and therefore, in our sampradāya, spiritual tradition, music was always used to sing in praise of God. You can sing in praise of anything. But what is the commitment. Commitment decides the quality, content and the depth of the music form. Music brings about an absorption whether it is lalappa music or otherwise. It is because the human mind gets absorbed in the laya. Absorption is called laya. Laya brings about absorption. No human mind can refuse to get into absorption or laya. This laya attracts thousands of people. That is what is happening all over the world. In India, even the folk music involved a theme wherein there is a praise of the village Goddess or a hero in the Mahābhārata or

Rāmāyaṇa because music is the medium to invoke, especially in the south of India. Even in the North, if you go to Himalayas, the villagers there sing kirtans. Music is one that brings them all together. The subject matter of the lyric is always Īsvara *because* human being is basically related to Īsvara.. An individual, who is the basic person, is related to the total, for the total is Īsvara. So when we invoke the Lord with a name, you are related to that Lord alone. That is why when you say, Hare, you are calling Hey, Hari, Rāma, Kṛṣṇā and you are calling Rāma or Hari”.

Once I take the role of a brother or sister, the role is over. But there is a hang over. Especially when you are a daughter in law, the hang over never ceases. We have roles to play and scripts to follow. Every individual is a bundle of hang overs. To avoid hang over you have to be in the



Conscious Being. You are basically related to Īsvara, the total and the individual is related to the total. In this situation, the simple music can bring about an absorption, laya, but it cannot invoke the basic Being. For that education about Īsvara is important and there should be some education. There ought to be some understanding about Īsvara; otherwise one will get lost in music. Understanding Īsvara is important.

One small little thing I want to tell through this programme. I used to attend the satsang and hear "Hare Rama Hare Krishna.." It is a great mantra. I had the satisfaction of attending this Hare Rama program. The reason was two fold. One is the way in which you chant. There is a melancholic tune. However, it is sung with devotion and I used to attend and sing that way. The second problem is the real problem. It was: you call Bhagavān "Hare Rama, Hare Krishna". You keep on calling but nothing is asked of them. You could have asked: 'pāhi mām, trāhi mām etc. Supposing you have employed a person called Ram and you call him and he comes. You don't tell him anything and afterwards you get up and go. What does it mean? It is a slap on his face. It is slap on his ego. You call Rama and keep on calling, and afterwards you get up and go. You should implore something. There should be a prārthanā. It is not so. It is called mahāmantrā.

It is a mantra. I know it is in Kalisantaranopanishad. First time when I went to Madras, I heard on the station platform, "paper, paper, orange, orange". Whatever is sold, he calls that. In Nagpur station I heard, chaiwala, puriwala, coffeewala. Wala means one who has. It means one who has. 'Balavan' means one who has strength. He introduces himself as one who has coffee or chaya or puri. If you want, you call me. I saw one fellow calling him the chaiwallah. He came taking a cup filled with tea. This man takes it and gives money to him. There is no verbal transaction.

That struck me. You don't require to ask something when you call Hari. Hari means, 'harati pāpani – 'dukha kāraṇāni iti Hariḥ. All the causes for unhappiness are papa and He takes it away. Hara also is same. Both belong to the same root. 'Hr Har' to rob. 'Hare' when you say, it means 'take away' all the causes of my unhappiness and sorrow. The name itself is enough to do that. Sanskrit names are like that. When I am singing in praise of Hari and when you know it, you become a meaningful person. In the same way Krishna means, 'karṣati iti sarvān. He is the source of all attraction. If you have attraction anywhere, there is Krishna".

All the participants in the Bhajan program were presented with gift bags. The winners in the competition were given special prizes.

Page sponsored by:

A Well Wisher