

2019 Global Akhanda Bhajan
Unity is Divinity - Purity is Enlightenment
Prayers for Global Peace and Purification

Bhajan and Global Akhanda Bhajan

Swami! Why do we sing Bhajans? What is the significance?

“The spiritual vibrations produced by Bhajans confer great joy both on those who sing them and on those who hear the songs.”

“Bhajans remove all negative thoughts, soothe the nerves, purify the mind, and fill the body and the heart with sweet love for the divine.”

“As one sings Bhajans, the mind is saturated with God Consciousness and a great ecstasy wells up from within.”

“No mental or intellectual effort is called for, as there is no need to understand anything while uttering the holy names of God and singing His glory.”

“The singing and the atmosphere created by Bhajans takes one beyond the realms of the body, the mind, and the intellect and helps to establish communion with the Higher Self (Consciousness) within.”

“Therefore, singing Bhajans becomes a beautiful and blissful experience.”

Swami! How should we participate in community devotional singing?

“Community Bhajans should not be treated as a pastime. When thousands of persons join in singing Bhajans, they should be fully absorbed in the devotion and the ecstasy of that experience.”

“The singing should be vibrant and soulful and not mechanical or uninspiring. It should combine Bhava (feeling), Raga (melody), and Tala (rhythm).”

“What delight can be experienced when all sing in chorus, with the same feeling, in the same tune and to the same timing! When there is such unity, the Divine can be experienced.”

Swami! What is Akhanda Bhajan? Why do we do it?

“An Akhanda Bhajan is devotional singing done without a break. Akhanda Bhajan must be as continuous as breathing itself, if it is to deserve its name.”

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“Singing this intensely, yearning for God and enjoying the experience of adoring Him helps to purify the atmosphere.”

“Today, man is forced to breathe air polluted by sounds that denote violence, hatred, cruelty, and wickedness.”

“Therefore, he is fast losing the high attainments that are in store for him. The vibrations resulting from singing the glory of God can cleanse the atmosphere and render it pure, calm, and ennobling.”

“It is with this high purpose in view that this program of global singing aloud the glory of God (Samkirtan) was designed.”

“Akhanda Bhajan is not done for the sake of one individual, one nation, or one community. It is for the welfare of humanity as a whole!”

Background

Dear Devotees! Let us reflect on what Swami has said on devotional singing and Global Akhanda Bhajan for a few moments.

What are some challenges we may face in devotional singing?

How can we best align with the motivation for and the intention behind devotional singing and GAB?

When we make song offerings in our home or Center or in a Sai event, often the mechanics of the offering and/or our own problems or desires tend to take over our attention and awareness. We wish to explore how we can set an explicit intention, a Sankalpa, for community peace, purity, or unity as the foundation for our practices and offerings. This applies to both the song leader as well as all the followers. Our hope is to start this exploration with 2019 Global Akhanda Bhajan onward.

Suggested Intentions / Resolutions / Prayers / Sankalpas

The following are some suggestions for setting our intentions before our song practices and offerings. Each individual or Center may adopt one of these suggestions or brainstorm and come up with their own. While these suggestions are in English, please feel free to express your intention in the language of your heart's choice.

1. Lord, make me an instrument of thy Peace and Love!

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2. Lord, make my offering your message!
3. Lord, purify my thoughts, words, and deeds in every moment!
4. Lord, may I love all, serve all, help ever, and hurt never!
5. Lord, think through me, speak through me, sing through me, and love through me!
6. Lord, as I wish to live in Peace, may all beings live in Peace!
7. Lord, as I wish to experience Your Love, may all beings experience Your Love!
8. Lord, may thy peace, mercy, and blessings flow through us to one and all!
9. God of hope, fill us with joy and peace, as our faith in You deepens!

Suggested Practice

We recommend the following approach to etch the intention deep into our subconscious mind.

- If you will be leading an offering, make a sincere attempt to practice your offering, with your intention, at least 108 times before the actual offering.
- The leaders and the followers take a moment to set the intention just before starting the practice or the offering.
- Each time the offering is practiced and/or offered, the same intention is set so that it is reinforced.
- It may be helpful to take a mindful breath or pause before the intention is set.
- Make a sincere attempt to contemplate and meditate on your chosen intention, whenever possible.