

Valedictory Address by Pujya Swamiji at Ārṣa Vijñāna Ġurukulam, Nagpur



There is always a last message. At the end of a stint of a study program there is a valedictory. Even in the upaniṣads there is a valedictory: ācaryāya priyam dhanam āhrtya prajātantum mā vyavacetsīḥ| satyāna pramaditavyam". Like this, you hear in the Veda this tradition of valedictory. And in the valedictory, they always tell about certain essential things. More often than not they are with reference to certain attitudes and certain routines one has to follow certain values one has to live and certain things to be avoided- "yāni avadyāni karmāni tāni sevityāni| ṇo itharāni. Only those things that are free from any blemish are to be followed by you. Not the opposite. Then

the teacher tells that what was 'sucaritāni' by us, that alone you follow. These are the things that are told generally.

But I thought this is not a simple program of education. It's not just educational study. When you are going to school, you are getting educated. You are developing a faculty to absorb different disciplines of knowledge to live your life, certain minimum infrastructure. You require that structure to think, to absorb. That is why it is said: "dve vidhye veditavye." It is a very interesting thing to say--"parā ca aparā ca iti." The 'tavya' suffix is used emphasizing that aparā-vidhyā also is to be studied. Aparā-vidhyā has no limit. It

has no beginning and end. It is 'aparā-vidhyā. Anything you can go on learning and learning. It is endless, because it has no last word in any discipline. But 'veditavye'. So aparā-vidhyā is not just a body of knowledge called 'aparā-vidhyā which you can learn. Anything you learn is aparā-vidhyā. You keep learning for some time.

Up to 24 years, you are supposed to learn. Svetaketu was sent to the gurukulam when he was 12 years old. He returned when he was 24 years old. That means, up to 24 years you have to study—twelve years at home and twelve years at the gurukulam. It is a very sane, safe way of education. Study any subject matter, but keep the intellect challenged. That is called education, a discipline of education. Your buddhi is challenged. And as you challenge your buddhi you also develop, in the process, an infrastructure. You gain an infrastructure, the tools to absorb knowledge. Then you become 'snātaḥ'. "Snātaḥ cet grhī bhavet." After the valedictory is over, 'cet grhī bhavet - get married. That is where you learn certain things you cannot learn in any other way. By interacting, fusing your ego in another ego, there is a certain growth involved emotionally. Then by parenting, you learn certain things. Whatever you missed as a child, you can give to the child and process you problems. And therefore, the call, "Prajatantum mā vyavacetsi!" This is the valedictory. But here I am not going to talk about that. Here the vidhyā is parā vidhyā. It is not open to options. After all options we come to parā vidhyā. This is not a philosophy either. Vedanta is a means of knowledge. Śabdham is pramāṇam. Jñānam is śabdham. And it is not open to options.

About this, I just want to say a few words. There is this truth about this knowledge, that it doesn't grow with branches and foliage, doesn't grow into a big tree but it gains better clarity. There was this Polaroid photograph, a very good example. When they use this camera, then immediately the film comes out. You don't see anything, just plain paper with some color. Then it goes on changing its color. You could see in the beginning there was nothing. This is like Vedanta listening-- nothing happens inside. Then afterwards you begin to see a picture, a color. This is how Vedanta works. You have to keep exposed to the teaching. No book helps; the direct exposure to the teacher alone helps. And then you keep looking at it and it keeps growing in clarity. After a few minutes you recognize a swami.

Then what?- swami...swami...swami. The recognition is always 'swami'. But the clarity is always growing. That is why we give ourselves a period of time like three years and constantly we expose ourselves to the vision of the upaniṣads. And whatever book you study it is the same vision, whether it is the Gīta or upaniṣads. The same vision- all that is here is one. And that is Īśvara. The alienation between the individual and the total is exactly called saṃsāra. There is no other saṃsāra. That I am an individual totally alienated from the total, from Īśvara, from everything else, makes me small and insignificant. I become a nobody and I have to defend and defend. Everybody becomes an enemy. Bhagavān's creation is like that. The creation is full of bacteria, and I have an immunity system and I am protected by the system. Why, somebody may ask, you gave an immunity system and create bacteria? Why don't you make

the whole creation sterile, so that you don't need an immunity system? But how to get rid of pāpa ? You require fever pāpa, cold pāpa etc. Therefore the whole system is hostile. This is how the creation is. This is how Bhagavān is. So when you have individuality it has a reality. This reality is not something you can swallow. That you are an individual is satyam, and therefore, that you are not everything else is also satyam. This orientation is a deadly orientation. And it has a certain truth also. Because it has a certain truth it becomes very powerful and deadly, more than what it is.

This alienation is saṁsāra-
“udaramantaram kurute atha tasya bhayam bhavati.” Arjuna's viśvarūpa darśana is a very poetic illustration. Arjuna had a blessing. He told Krishna he wanted to see in him the whole world. Till then he was talking about it. But he wanted a visual appreciation of it. Krishna said “alright, please see.” And he saw. He saw everything in Bhagavān, in his cosmic form. Then he got frightened. He got frightened because he excluded himself. This is the truth. He saw himself separately, therefore, he got frightened. Then he asked Bhagavān to come back to his original form. He was neither enlightened.

This alienation is the problem, this alienation is saṁsāra. And therefore the absence of alienation is only in terms of Īśvara first. Naiṣkarmyasiddhikāra thought it was the problem of pratyagātmā. Understanding of the inner self is inadequate, and therefore, is a problem. He never talked about the tatpadārtha, about Īśvara. The problem is only tatpadārtha.

It is the easiest thing to understand. And that is why people understand this and find themselves completely lost in society, lost in saṁsāra. This consciousness doesn't solve any problem. The problem is alienation, that I am alienated from the whole, from the total. That means you have to settle your account with Īśvara and ensure there is zero alienation and total absence of alienation. Īśvara cannot be there without including you. When you say Īśvara is all, you better include yourself.

But this 'all' is only a statement. You have to see it clearly. When it is taught, Īśvara is abhinna-nimitta-upādāna-kāraṇam, the maker, material cause; there will be a certain insight like the polaroid picture. But the assimilation of my being not alienated, my being included in the whole that is Īśvara- means, at every level—physical, biological, physiological, in my illness, in my wellness, in my emotions psychologically, in my understanding, my memory And if there are some issues in my sub-conscious, then that is also included in the psychological order. At all these levels I have to assimilate. Why? Because at all these levels I exist. I exist as an individual, alienated in the sub-conscious and therefore in the conscious. In the unconscious I live as an individual alienated from mother, father, everybody. And so, being in the world, the stance is of a ninja fighting. The more I see the problems people have after listening to the sastram, the more I realize the importance of this clarity of this particular fact- Īśvara at every level includes me. I am not alienated from Īśvara at any level of my experience, of my individuality. This is satyam. This clarity has to grow. For the

whole life, it grows. If you live your day to day life, in whichever way- if you create a home getting married, or if you already have a home, or you want to live as a brahmachari, as a sadhu, then you have to make sure this clarity is maintained.

Best way of letting this clarity grow is to share this knowledge. Just as Pāṇiniyan Grammar will never stay with you unless you find a victim! You have to share the knowledge with someone, you have to teach. Then it will be with you. And so Vedanta has to be shared- “anyonyam tatprabodhanam taccintanam tatkathanam.” So, when you have to teach somebody you have to think? Cintanam takes place. Then only you will find the loopholes in your thinking. The process of assimilation is only when you begin to share this knowledge with people. And therefore, for your own clarity, the clarity with reference to Īśvara, the whole life has to be resigned to Īśvara.. Resign yourself to Īśvara. The more you recognize Īśvara, the more you are sane, you are secure; you are not out of place. The whole scheme of things is Īśvara. There is a law behind everything..

Possibilities of change are infinite. There is no necessity for passivity. The possibilities of change are infinite. That's how Īśvara is. The more we are able to appreciate the presence of Īśvara, the clearer is the truth that I am not alienated. And the other is also not alienated. In my thinking he is not alienated. Then only I can teach. I don't see the other person alienated. I can teach the person only when I see that he is not alienated. Then I can bring that fact to the person's

appreciation. In the process, my own knowledge gains clarity. And therefore, when you go out there, people will see you as someone who is accomplished. But they will find that you also get angry, you are also restless. They'll say “Three years of Vedanta and what happened to you?” Then Vedanta gets a bad name, because they don't understand what it is all about. In fact the study of Vedanta will bring out problems that were underneath. Somebody said he was more peaceful before he studied Vedanta. It is true. It's something like a carpet, when you remove it its more dusty than before. There is so much dust under the carpet. That is the reality. It has to surface. Vedanta will surface it. That's why Īśvara is so important.

So understand, our culture is a culture of Īśvara. All that is here is Īśvara. That's our music, that's our language, our scripture, our habits, our attitude towards worship, towards forms –it is all based upon it. Towards money, towards knowledge, towards your own body- it is all Īśvara.

With these words I congratulate all of you. This is a real jungle (where you live). And so you have really managed very well. You have done well. And this day, we should remember Shrikant (Jichkar). He was the one who wanted this and I am very happy that his sankalpa has proved to be true, that we are able to see the completion of one more course. This place will continue to produce more people who are able to serve the cause of just sharing this knowledge. I also congratulate Mataji. She is an amazing person and I am all admiration for her, and all students now should offer her some flowers and express her gratitude. Thank you all.