

Pujya Swamiji's address at Nagpur on the Vijayadasami Day

On this great Vijayadasami day, I am very happy to be with all of you. When I saw you, doing the drills I felt that Bharat is alive. Bharat has a great future. Bharat is not just a geographical entity. It is a breathing organism. It has a culture. It has religion. It has wisdom. Our social custom, manners, cultural forms religious rituals and practices and spiritual wisdom — they are all one. *Āsethu-himācalaparyantam* the culture is one. Religion is the same. It is based upon wisdom. And the wisdom is enshrined in our Vedas. People do not know the Vedas. What the Vedas are, they do not know. But the Vedic statement, '*īśāvāsyam idaṃ sarvam* — all that is here is *Īśvara*; one should look upon this entire *jagat* as *Īśvara*.' This is a Vedic statement. Go to a villager who has no education, no exposure to the Vedic teaching. If this villager continues to be a Hindu, ask him this question, 'where is God, *Īśvara*?' He will answer you, 'All that is here is *Īśvara* — *sub Bhagavān hai*,' in his own language. You may go to the himalayan villages, to any village in this country. And please ask the same question to any one. The answer will be the same — if the person is not converted ofcourse. If the person happens to be the recipient of our traditions, gained from our elders, he will give the same answer, 'All that is here is *Bhagavān* — *sub Bhagavān hai*.'

Vṛddha-vyavahāreṇa — through the thinking and practice of the elders, people have received this Vedic knowledge without knowing the Vedas. Through customs and manners they have received this knowledge. India is therefore a breathing organism; a live organism. It is not just some geographical area. That is why India is formed of the customs and manners, and attitudes of its people. No other culture has this vision. No where in the world will any one look up on a book as Goddess Sarasvati. No where in the world does any one look up on money as Goddess Lakshmi. Not only money is looked upon as Lakshmi, children are Lakshmi, a home is Lakshmi; success is Lakshmi; land is Lakshmi, *dhānyam* is Lakshmi. What is not Lakshmi? And any form of learning, any art, *kalā*, is Sarasvati, the *śakti* of *Īśvara*.

And we have a tradition to teach this wisdom. And we have very sophisticated methods to communicate this knowledge. We have it all. The wisdom is enshrined in our scriptures and the religious forms. It is integrated in to all our day to day activities. This great vision is present only in Bharat and the people of Bharat. It is the people of Bharat that make Bharat. And their customs and manners are very important; the forms are very important. When you take a bath in the morning and

you put *chandan* and *kumkum* on your forehead and put flowers in your hair, it is *ātmapūja*. When you see the *pūja* that is done at an altar or a temple, it is the same thing. They do *abhiṣekam*, which is same as *snānam*; they offer food; they decorate with *chandan* and *kumkum*. They offer flower, *vastram*. In the same way everyday in the morning when you take a bath all that is offered to the Lord is offered to yourself by yourself. This is an amazing culture! It is a religious culture, a spiritual culture. There is no other country that has this kind of vision or this kind of culture. And this has to be preserved. It has to be protected. One way of preserving is to see that it is inherited and followed. And the other thing is that we have to make sure that it is protected.

If you look at the animals, there are two types of animals; one is the vegetarian animal, the herbivorous, the other is the carnivorous animal which eats the vegetarian animals. The carnivorous animals have to survive for which they have to find food and water. All they have to do is catch one vegetarian animal. And their job is over. They have only one job. A tiger has to find a deer, a rabbit and its job is over. Whereas, if you look at a deer, a cow, or a buffalo, they have two jobs. One is that they have to find grass to graze; and the other is they have to look around to the left and to the right, to see whether there are any predators around. Being vegetarians, I suppose that they are more evolved and thus have two jobs. And a human being also has got these two jobs of finding food and protecting himself from the predators. In addition to this, he has one more job. And that is, he has to deal with himself. Like the animals he has to survive; he has to find food; in addition he has to deal with himself. He has to accept himself. He has to protect himself. And he should have a certain self esteem. He has to respect himself because he is self-conscious. This is common for all human beings. But if he is a Hindu, not just a human being, he has one more job. Like that vegetarian animal he has to live his religion and also look around and see whether there is any predator around who would destroy his religion. He has to see whether there is any source of harm and he has to protect himself. It is important. Therefore as a Hindu, we have certain responsibilities. We have to take care of our country, religion and culture. I am always a very positive person. Now seeing all of you here, I become more positive. I am very happy that we have people and people to take care of this great religion. Thank you all.