



EGO

Ego after Self-realisation Extract from 16/2/02 Satsang

Om Shri Paramatmane Namaha

Q: I allow or used to allow people to use me or control me. Is this, or was this, directed by my Ego, my fear of not being loved or by my guilt?

A: Everything that gives you sorrow is due to your Ego. All other factors, such as fear, feelings of not being loved or guilt, are also included in Ego. They are the products of Ego. Therefore, the realisation that we are or were used by somebody causes us to feel sorrow.

We ask how and why it could happen. We wonder if it was due to the fear of not being loved or due to guilt. The reason for this is that our mind interprets events in that way, according to our individual characteristics. But ultimately it is due to our Ego. Ego is the real problem. 'Ego' means our illusion of identifying our existence with something that we are not, and our feeling of separateness from infinite Truth. That is what Ego is.

We identify ourselves with the body, the senses, the mind and the intellect, and these are the only factors that we recognise. We know nothing about God or Spirit except what we have heard or read in books. An interesting fact is that in the field of spirituality or religion each one of us is trying to know what cannot be known. It is such an interesting issue! Such a dilemma! All great saints tell us that you can never know the Truth. Then what should one do? You cannot stop searching and yet you cannot know the Truth. You can only be the Truth, because you already are the Truth! There is a difference between 'knowing' and 'being'. 'Knowing' means you are separate from what is to be known. You think that you will know the Truth: "I am here, and Truth is there, and I have to know the Truth." This would show that a duality exists. So it can never be known like this, because there is no duality. You can be Truth yourself, because you are really always the Truth, always Divine, always Conscious-ness.

So what has to happen? We should correct the mistake that we make of not considering ourselves as Divine. It is a process of elimination by negation: "I am not this; I am not that, I am not this, I am not that, and so on." Realisation happens like this. It is the path of trying to know one's existence and then reaching the ultimate experience. This is one path. You eliminate everything that comes to your mind, and, when there is nothing left to eliminate, then what remains is what you are and what you have always been. In this way, one realises the Truth of one's own Self which is also the Self of everyone else! This is one method that can be used.

Another method is to think as follows:

"I do not know what I am, but I feel there is a supreme power, God, and that He loves me. I love Him, and when I love Him, He alone exists."

The reason is that there is no duality in the ultimate stage of Love. As long as there is duality in Love, it is not Love. As long as the two remain two, it is not Love. But when one gets completely lost in Love then one realises Truth – God.

Therefore, Ego is a barrier, because Ego creates separateness.

Q: Can the Ego ever completely disappear?

A: This is a good question. My reply is that: Ego as existence – ‘is-ness’ or ‘being’ – never disappears. However, it is the idea of existing separately that disappears. The notion of separation from the Totality disappears.

This feeling of unity with the Totality is one step below the ultimate experience. This feeling is also a creation of the mind. It is a superior feeling, but it is not the ultimate experience.

After experiencing the true existence, a person will live a normal life. He will do everything as an individual person does, but his inner state will not remain the same. The type of existence which used to create problems and pain will not remain. Existence is still there, if you call Ego ‘existence’. Pure existence is always there, and then the realisation occurs that it is not unconscious existence. When these two experiences happen, and one knows through experience that ‘I exist’, bliss is also experienced. It means that Totality exists, Infinity exists, and that this Existence is Conscious.

Ego is present as long as one has inner feelings. There is duality because somebody is feeling and there is something to be felt.

It is pride that is the problem. If Ego is considered as existence it will not come to an end. How can it end? The Enlightened one exists without having the pride of existing in any special manner. The most extraordinary thing in human life is to become ordinary. Peacefulness, bliss and love emerge only when the illusion of being extraordinary disappears.

Q: Not something special, but at least I exist...

A: Separate from Totality – this also goes away.

Q: Does the ‘I’ remain?

A: ‘I’ remains for the person, but one knows full well that this ‘I’ means nothing. It is simply a tool for that person. This ‘I’ is just a working arrangement in the continuing field of activity.

For example, an enlightened person is not one who does not recognise whether the being coming towards him is a man or a woman, or a cow, or a horse. It is not that the Self-realised man cannot tell the difference between a girl and a cow. He sees everything in a normal way. However, he is not at all influenced, for example, by whether a woman that is coming towards him is young and beautiful or old and wrinkled. He’s not affected by this at all. All liking and disliking disappears.

It is always difficult to describe this state. For your own evolution, perhaps it is most important to understand that it is pride that goes away. It is the pride of being separate or of being something special. The inner agitation that most of us suffer is due to the idea in our minds that: “I am something special, and, because I am special, I should get special treatment from God as well. What is He doing? All this injustice! I’m not as bad as some others, but still I am suffering! Look at my neighbours. They are complete scoundrels, and yet they seem happier than me.”

Such attitudes create problems in one’s life. The presence of pride in any form is the main cause of all this inner turmoil. It becomes very clear to an enlightened person that, these advantages count for nothing whether an individual is highly educated, is more attractive, or is wealthier than other people. He knows that his education, his pleasing appearance, and his riches are perishable and changeable. Therefore, he knows that no credit should be given to

them. If one has learning, then let it be used for those who are illiterate or uneducated. If one has extra money, then let it be given to those who are needy and deserving. Other illusions also disappear, for instance the notion of physical beauty. People are constantly yearning for it. The notion that someone's nose is very attractive, or the eyes are lotus-shaped becomes forgotten. These foolish ideas drop away completely, because one knows that all physical beauty is only skin deep. Such an enlightened person puts more value on the inner refinement of an individual than on his physical beauty. He is not concerned if the individual's face is not beautiful by worldly standards, because that person may possess a beauty of emotions, ideas and character. A person on the spiritual path values nothing except God. For a realised man no incongruity or contradiction is found in the existing world. For a realised man there is no problem at all with the world. To him the world is all divine, and everything is fine. This happens by the grace of that infinite wisdom – God. As the great saint Tulsidas tells us:

“Only one comes to know You, whom You enable to know Yourself, and, not through one's own efforts and power. And one who comes to know You, becomes You.”

Swami Ramsukhdas adds:

“One becomes You because one was always You, and nothing exists but You - the Truth.”

Swami Ramsukhdas sometimes makes some very interesting comments. He once made a comment in a discourse with thousands of people present:

“Oh friends, is not God omnipotent?”

Everybody agreed that He is omnipotent. The powers of God are infinite.

Then he said:

“However, there is one thing which even God cannot do!”

Everybody was perplexed.

“Do you agree that God is all-powerful and He can do anything?”

The people agreed.

“But, as I say, there is one thing which even God cannot do.”

Everybody was silent.

“Even if He wanted to be, He cannot be away from us, because we are always a part of Him.”

For example, the ocean has no power to be separate from the drops and the waves, even if it wanted to be!

Let me summarise by saying that Ego is the real problem and it goes away only through His mercy and His grace.

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