



EGO
Grace and Ego
Extract from 7/9/93 Satsang

Om Shri Paramatmane Namaha

Q: Would you please say something about Grace?

A: Grace is something about which it is best not to speak at all. Grace cannot be brought about, but it just happens. When it happens, it just happens and it is not a matter for discussion. When it happens, you experience it and you do not talk about it. If you talk at all, you talk about it later after it has happened. To some of you it might already have happened and to some it may happen in the future. Therefore, we can say something about Grace, taking all these points into account.

It is not an exaggeration to say that the greatest factor in human life is Grace. Our great folly is that we are not ready to understand this greatest element in life. The element of Ego is so strong in human beings that they think that the world revolves on account of them. But the world was revolving quite nicely before they were born and it will revolve quite well after they die. However, they still think that the world revolves due to their efforts. Some people may not worry about world-wide events but may think at least about events in their own country, town or family. If even this is not the case, then at least most of us believe that our lives progress because we extend influence over it. I mean that Ego, the false element, is always on hand to give an explanation for everything that happens.

If success comes, one thinks it happened because one deserved it. However, if something goes against one's expectations and wishes, one thinks that it happened due to the misdeeds of other people: "Bad things happen because other people are bad or incompetent and good things happen because I am good and capable." Most of us are in the habit of thinking that we are faultless and that faults lie only in others. Generally this is the trend of human thinking.

However, the course of nature is not like this. Events happen in everybody's life. Situations come and one is compelled to ask why such things have happened and what one should do. There are often situations in life when people come to the conclusion that they cannot handle them: "I want it to happen like this but I cannot make it happen. I am helpless!" At such moments one wonders if there is any higher power that can help him. Even then one starts the prayer with 'if'. One starts by saying 'if' because one does not fully believe in that power. One's prayers also start with the assumption that one is doing that power a favour: "Let that power help me, if it is there at all." Even in the event of adversity one is not ready to go with a bowed head and say: "Please help me." One is so egotistical that one says: "If you are there, help me." It is as if one was obliging God by asking for his help, doing God a favour! The element of humility is not so easy to cultivate in one's life.

Similarly, in life there are occasions when you approach a person and ask: "Can you please do it for me?" In your outward behaviour you show humility but within you are not humble. Even when, due to force of circumstances, you request someone to give you assistance,

inwardly you think: “It is only due to my bad luck that I am in this bad situation. When my time comes I will show you who I really am!”

The element of real inner humility begins when you recognise that there is a power in this world which causes worldly events to happen: “My life moves forward and events happen without my intervention.” You come to this realisation at quite a late stage. Grace does not work unless this inner state comes to one.

In one sense Grace works all the time. The all-pervading, all-existing power – God – is always compassionate towards human beings and all their failings. This omnipotent power forgives the Ego and, despite the Ego, brings many benefits. Good parents forgive the misdeeds of their children and still try to help them despite their foolishness. In the same way, the supreme power forgives the follies of human beings and tries to help them.

When I said that without humbleness there is no Grace, I meant that there is no consciousness or awareness of Grace. Inner awareness of Grace in the life of a person starts only when the person becomes humble. You discover that undeserved success happens in life when you are ready to view events impartially, to see the truth as it is and to accept your own limitations. If you view your life honestly, you will find that luck comes to you without you deserving it.

At this point one comes to realise that there is some power which forgives one for one’s follies, for one’s deficiencies and weaknesses, and brings about favourable circumstances: “Whatever that infinite power may be, I may not understand it, but I know from within that there is power which makes my life flow the way it is meant to.” This is the point at which humility begins. When inner humility starts arising and Ego gradually disappearing, one recognises the element of Grace. Life becomes smooth, easy and happy for one who starts recognising this element of Grace.

Similarly when children are well-behaved and obey their parents, the parents provide everything they can for them. Every father or mother tells their children who are obedient: “Do not worry! Do your work and we are with you. We will take care of you if you are in any difficulty.” Parents will have reservations and an attitude of harshness with a disobedient child who is naughty and untruthful. The parents are not hostile but sometimes they try to scold or punish the child because they want the child to follow the right path. If they realise that their children do not deserve their support and behave according to their own wrong motivations, they may even threaten to disinherit them. However, good parents have the tendency not to punish but to correct the child. In the same way, when we take the wrong path, the Divine often gives us a warning. If, even then, we follow the wrong path, we can bring bad luck upon our heads. Like a loving parent, the Divine does not want to punish us, but to correct us. If we try to follow the best path available, Grace will always be with us.

There is one more important point to understand. Grace does not mean that everything will happen as you want it to happen. Many people have the notion that if there is Grace, everything should work out as they desire it. Grace does not mean that the Divine is always ready to fulfil your desires. If human beings were given the freedom for the fulfilment of all their desires, life would become complete chaos. The desires of human beings are often so ridiculous and inconsistent that they would make our life here difficult. Therefore, when Grace is there, the Divine does not fulfil our desires but makes us better and better. Of course, He fulfils many of the desires, which are necessary to be fulfilled in order to assist in our evolution.

FROM SATSANGS OF GURUDEV SHRI OJASWI SHARMA

The Divine decides what you should have and what you should not have. If somebody becomes ready to accept whatever the Divine grants us, then life becomes a place for festivity and happiness, and one will find that everything is full of Grace and happiness.

I have talked much about Grace, about which nothing should be said! Grace is to be felt and not described.

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