

Q & A SESSION, Q. 305: SWAMI'S GRACE

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Om Sai Ram

*The following Q & A are taken from Prof. Anil Kumar's book
Satyopanisad, Volume 1, pages 26-29*

Swami, why are we not the recipients of Divine grace?

Bhagavan: It is not proper to feel so. You are wrong if you think so. God's grace is equally available to all of you. He makes no distinctions of cast, creed, sex, nationality, and so on.

You should know that the defect is in you. You have to cleanse the tumbler of your heart. For example, it is raining heavily now. If you want to collect water in a vessel, what you do is to keep the vessel straight. However, if you turn it downwards or put it upside down, is it possible to collect water? The downpour of rain will be of no help at all.

Therefore we have to keep our hearts always pure and ready to receive the rain of grace. We have to turn it towards the rain of God's Love in order to collect it. Is it not so?

Swami, our fortune is immeasurable! How many people get this opportunity? This is all your grace. But how are we to preserve this?

Bhagavan: Look! Out of the millions of devotees, how many are able to be here? Is this proximity possible for everyone? Merit from several past lives has made you fortunate enough to be here. Out of a few thousands in our institutions, how many students are lucky enough to be here? Only a few of you could follow me to this place, Kodaikanal. This you will have to preserve and sustain carefully.

A small example: Here is a roll of thread, which is the product of much rotating and winding. A time consuming job, really! If they take up this

process in haste, and drop it in the middle out of neglect or carelessness, all the thread will lie scattered on the ground.

Similarly, your fortune is like this roll of thread, carefully and laboriously wound like the merit of the good deeds you have done in your past lives.

If you neglect this fortune and lose it by any mischance, you can't get it back. All the effort you have put in will go to waste. The thick pad at the center of this roll is like your faith around which your meritorious deeds are wound. So, never neglect this good luck, nor take it for granted, nor view it as simple and ordinary. Negligence and carelessness are harmful to spiritual aspirants.

Swami, how does your Grace affect our destiny and our prarabdha, past karma?

Bhagavan:

God's grace and God's will can change anything. God is love. His infinite compassion makes Him change your *prarabdha karma* or the *karmic* effects of your past lives. A devotee can arrest God in the jail of his heart.

In this world, there is nothing you can't achieve with devotion. God's grace can cancel all your *karmic* effects or the evil effects of your past life. Nothing untoward can happen to you.

A small example: You see many medicines kept for sale in a medical shop. On each of the medicines you find the date of manufacture and the date of expiry. The medicine will not act with efficiency beyond the date of expiry. It becomes just useless.

What God does is exactly the same thing. He simply stamps on the medicine bottle the date of expiry, cancelling your *prarabdha karma*, the suffering you are going through in this life. Right then, your suffering ends. This is how Swami, out of His sheer grace and compassion, gives you relief.

Swami, can we be sure of God's grace if we do sadhana regularly?

Bhagavan:

Certainly! As sure as anything! Why do you doubt? For example, you have a pet dog. You feed it every day and you will notice that it will get habituated to come to you exactly at the same time every day to be fed. Is this not true? When regularity makes a dog respond, why not God? You will definitely receive His grace.

Swami, we are here in Your Presence because of Your infinite grace and mercy. Your blessings have brought us all here. We bask in the sunshine of bliss bestowed on us by your Divine darshan, sparshan and sambhashan. Do we still need merit from past lives and the samskaras?

Bhagavan:

The present state of bliss and the merit from past lives are both essential and they should go together. They are closely interrelated. Take this example: Here the soil is sandy. When there are heavy rains, the water sinks into the soil or gets absorbed in the soil. The same is the situation with you at present. Therefore, devotion doesn't remain steady.

But suppose there is a flow of river water, what happens when it rains? Water will flow with greater vigor than before. Similarly your present blessed opportunity of being with Me is like rainwater. If you have good *samskaras* from your past life, like the water flow of a river, the blissful state you are experiencing now will continue with more vigor.

God's grace is like a shower of rain. Your merit from the past will enable you to contain it. So, I tell you often to retain the good luck, the opportunity, and the privilege given to you. You draw water out of the well in a bucket. But you have to pick up the bucket full of water by yourself.

On the other hand, if you drop it in the middle, what happens? You can't collect water, can you? However, there is one important thing. If you love God intensely, you can achieve anything. As human effort increases, God's grace also lends strength and intensity to the effort, which ultimately leads man to success.

Thank you for your keen attention to these points, Om Sai Ram