

## Anugraha

*Excerpts from Pujya Svāmiji's anugraha bhāṣāam  
at the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary function of AVG Coimbatore.*

Even a trace of understanding of the self or of Īśvarā, is a samskāra; it is anugraha. Anugraha or grace, as it is sometimes translated, is always earned, even though we may say, it is Bhagavān's grace. There is nothing without a cause.

When it comes to managing the events that unfold in one's life, anugraha is important. No matter whether the events that unfold are pleasant or unpleasant, free will gives one the choice to live in harmony with the order that is ahimsā. To do so requires anugraha. If humans were completely pre-programmed, like animals, anugraha would not be needed. An animal does not have free will, and therefore, behaves in accordance with the order. Humans on the other hand, have a choice; a human can choose a behaviour in the light of events that unfold one's life.

Having free will, means one has the freedom to choose not to go with desires. Most desires disappear as they occur. However, sometimes a desire catches one, and that is a privilege, not, as some people think, something to feel guilty about. "I am

in the form of desire that is unopposed to Dharmā", said Bhagavān Kṛṣṇā in Bhagavad Gītā,. With such glorification as this, the sky or even beyond the sky, is all right to desire for. The more desires you have, the more Bhagavān's grace one has, so long as those desires do not go against the order of Dharmā.

Dharmā is connected to the instinctual drive to survive, to ahimsa – the basic value that one is endowed with. The human has the choice to say no to shouting, to abusing, to causing hurt. One can choose to be in harmony with Dharmā, which is a manifestation of Īśvarā. Just as no human wants to be hurt, neither does a cow or any other living creature want to get hurt.

Conforming to Dharmā is to be in harmony with Īśvarā. When one does the right thing, one feels good. Conforming to Dharmā is not obliging anybody. It is using your free will to say no, so that one can conform to Dharmā. There is nothing wrong with having desires. They are there. There are reasons for them; there is a background for them. They happen, and one has the

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privilege of fulfilling them. Indeed, ambitions and desires make one healthy. There are, however, always hidden variables in filling them. These hidden variables need anugraha, grace. It is not freely distributed; one has to earn it. Why is it called grace and not karma-phala? One does not know which karma brought this phala and when one cannot pinpoint which karma brought this phala, it is called grace. When one uses one's free will through prayer or through giving, with no strings attached, one earns grace. Prayer is the only action which enjoys a hundred percent free will. If you are in

distress no one makes you pray. Dānam, giving, when one is in a position to give where needed with no questions asked, can be close to a hundred percent use of free will, and thus also can earn anugraha.

We need a lot of anugraha to control the hidden variables while fulfilling long-term ambitions. To be at the right place, at the right time, requires plenty of anugraha, earned by reaching out action and prayer.

*Report by  
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