

Standing on a Bridge

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Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/762>

Robert: Hello, Sundari and Sri Ramji. I'm sure you're very busy, but please accept a brief note of appreciation of your work in its role in setting me free. My mind was fairly steady already, but I had some burning questions, yet with patience they were always answered within a short time just by reading and listening intently. It was like tuning a radio until the frequency was clear.

This took a while, as I was one of those who need concentrated repetition due to the subtlety of the teachings. Understanding kind of sneaked up on me in spite of 40 years of preparation (I first heard of Vedanta back in 1972 whilst a psychedelic yogi, then was sidetracked by Buddhism). I now know who I am consistently, no longer conflated with objects. Maybe it's more like remembering. As a child, I knew the self.

After a really terrible time in hell beginning a little over four years ago, desire for liberation became a red-hot iron ball I'd swallowed. I would have rather been dead than suffer anymore. Now I'm just standing on a bridge watching objects flow by, including the person I had believed was me. There was a brief phase where everything at times appeared too beautiful, if you know what I mean; sometimes I burst into tears out of sheer relief and was glad when the intensity lessened. Now all is still and peaceful no matter what's apparently going on, even my own buffoonery. *Sattvic* states may come and go, but I remain unchanged.

On the relative plane, a love of solitude continues. Unsought encounters with others often concern fear and pain: conflict, abandonment, divorce, infirmity, disease, addiction and death. At first, I had nothing to offer except my obsession at the time with Vedanta. This mostly went in one ear and out the other, so now I try to speak starting from the point of view of the *jiva*. This approach seems to work a lot better.

Recently *Isvara* sent two girlfriends from my youth back onto the stage. They, among others, once appeared to be the source of much heartache, but now I simply love them just as they are. I would like to marry one of them, but we'll see.

A lifelong fascination with words has flowered into an interest in writing fiction, due in part to using it earlier as a tool to order my disturbed mind. Interestingly, a wise being showed up as a character who seems a lot smarter than me. I'm not aware of a calling as a teacher, but perhaps through writing entertaining stories seeds can be planted here and there that might sprout in receptive minds. For now it's just fun. In fact everything is enjoyable thanks to self-realization, though self-actualization is an ongoing challenge, but one which is relished.

Thank you again, and belated congratulations on the anniversary of your wedding!

~ Robert

Ram: Dear Robert, thanks a lot for this wonderful, well-written letter. It is as perfect a statement of enlightenment as there is. I will make it anonymous and put it on the Web. Sundari and I enjoyed it very much. I particularly liked your last statement, that you relished actualizing the knowledge.

The house that ignorance built takes a while to dismantle, and the dismantling is not an act of will. The knowledge of who you are does the work and, as you say, you stand on the bridge and watch the objects flow by. We are happy for you. When you write some fiction with these ideas, send it to me and if I think it appropriate I will post them at the website if you like.

~ Much love, Ram and Sundari