

The End of a Long Journey

Ram (James Swartz)

2016-01-21

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/2511>

James: Dear Dwayne, I love this email! I really do. It is so eloquent, so true. I get emotional when I read it. It is beautiful. I took the liberty to tidy up the lingo a bit and I made a few comments, nothing special. I will post it at the website; it is so inspirational.

Dwayne: Dear James, it's odd – I have wanted to write to you continually for the last two weeks – but every time I just could not think of anything to say other than being so grateful for the teaching. I listen to *Panchadasi* every day, and have just completed (after eighteen months) *Viveka* – all 581 chapters (okay, about a page a day).

My inquiry just keeps progressing, almost effortlessly, and even if there are pangs of binding *vasanas* of various kinds, they are for far shorter periods. And sometimes now I just head on right into them with no judgment – just facing them out, knowing it'll be fine.

Relating to the *Mandukya Upanishad*, I had a few odd dreams. In one recently I was in deep dark water (always a childhood nightmare) and could see this huge fish – like a dinosaur-size crocodile thing coming my way. The terror was really palpable, like all of “me” wanting to scream and run. In parallel was this awareness in the dream “hold on, it's a dream – I can stand right here – it can eat ‘me’ up – nothing will change.” While the small-self “I” still ran, I observed it almost as if out of the corner of one eye.

James: I used to have a variant of that dream when I was a kid, but the monster was a big tiger that chased my little body down an endless beach and just when it was about to grab me I would wake up. One of Vedanta's favorite metaphors for *samsara* is “the jaws of a crocodile,” meaning something that is almost impossible to escape.

Dwayne: It is a little tougher to discriminate in the waking state. While there are no big-toothed fish here, like schools of piranhas, the small ordinary apparent fears and desires have a greater impact and cause this apparent “I” to dance like a fool. I thought that this dream would go on till the end of my life but with the knowledge I know that it is not so. The gratitude I feel is amazing. How can just knowledge be so wonderful, so full of life? But it is the same as awareness, so how else could it be?

James: Grace is earned, Dwayne. You persevered and the Lord was merciful.

Dwayne: This is not not some blasé death wish or ego thing – I am fully aware that the “I” thought I was is kind of just disappearing. It is still there but it is like a ghost, kind of transparent. It still think it can make a career and/or be loved by some special person. It's not that I criticize these deep wishes from some high place, not at all. Even though it seems I am in the middle of them, I am not them, nor am I the one who is identified with them.

James: Yes, slowly inquiry wears away the resistance and the person you thought you were just fades away little by little. The veils of ignorance are lifting.

Dwayne: I have no idea where they came from originally or how I came to think that that which identified so strongly with them was definitely me. I can't logically blame anyone either. It's like they just appeared at some early time – but even that is debatable. I can sense there was a “time” before they kicked in – but if you asked me when that was and I said “as a child” – it would only be half true – because I did not know this back then either.

James: Vedanta calls it “beginningless” ignorance. The “time” before they kicked in was you, awareness, which is always free of them.

Dwayne: I have noticed I need to be careful in business to let people know what I know. It is such a sham, dogs chasing their tails to make money. I don't care if I get fired. I really don't care, even if I don't know where the money will come from to pay my bills. That's the truth.

James: This dispassion is the nature of the self. It tells me that the assimilation of the knowledge of who you are is on pace. Just keep up the scripture practice daily. Do your work as *karma yoga* and keep inquiring.

Dwayne: I feel the practice now is to learn to identify those very faculties I thought I was, even the intellect to differentiate them better. It's the opposite of intellectual – it's like being in a jungle and needing to really know friend from foe – until it just becomes benign. It's not the risk of getting eaten – it's worse – it's getting lost on the unconscious, robotic merry-go-round of apparent woe, waking up – as I used to – some days later when the fog cleared, then repeating the same pattern once more!

James: It does become benign, no doubt about it. Yes, letting the *vasanas* control you is the worst fate of all. You are seeing clearly. Good for you.

Dwayne: The last weeks have been really like coming to the end of a very long road, as if the body and mind are covered in an almost physical road dust. Sometimes they feel so incredibly tired, but I feel exhilarated at the same time.

I am so grateful – Vedanta and your teaching has made the impossible possible for me, that is the only way I can describe it.

Much love to all, please do take care of yourself.