

The Strong, Full Sureness

Ram (James Swartz)

2011-07-22

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/920>

Lynda: Hi, James. I wanted to thank you for the *satsangs* and weekend in Turkey. As I mentioned, having read your book several times over with things becoming clearer with each read, there was an added understanding hearing everything in person. It was so helpful and inspiring. Thank you. I hope you enjoyed your visit. I have a couple of things I have been musing over which I would like to get your view on. They are not really questions as such, more to find out if I am on the right track.

I (little me) have no problem at all with accepting what Vedanta teaches and I can give up my story in most part – I say “most,” as this is a work in progress and I am not completely confident as yet that something might not rear its ugly head from somewhere. It all makes a lot of sense and is really clear, based upon my own realisations in my lifetime to date. I would say my work has been my stongest *vasana*. I came to the realisation that no amount of doing would ever ensure that things would happen in a certain way about two years ago, and it took another year to realise it again ☺ which is when I started doing workshops and meditation just over a year ago, but something significant happened after I read your book the first time last September and my life changed quite quickly (or appeared to change).

I started focusing on my own well-being and my health and I stopped worrying about what I realised I had no control over, i.e. the business. I stopped smoking overnight and my eating habits changed (the same, overnight). I have eaten mostly raw food for the last five years, but I was kind of being lazy with it, but started again in full force. I also went into a hibernation of sorts, I stopped socialising for months on end, did not see a soul, not intentionally, it’s just the way it happened – and spent a lot of time reading and musing about Vedanta, the Self and the self. And then you came to Cape Town. I am not sure what the strong, full sureness is behind the choices and the subsequent follow-through, but that sureness is ever-present in my life these days. It is very focused and vigilant but not in a forceful or forced way. It feels like it is me, but not me. What is this? Has some knowledge integrated itself in such a way that I see more clearly and am aware differently? It’s a subtle but very-there “feeling.” It’s more like a sense of something than a feeling. And this sureness is fully there with the self-enquiry.

James: Self-knowledge has taken place. It is causing the “strong, full sureness,” which is confidence in yourself. It means that Lynda is assimilating the essence of the teachings.

This is the fruit of self-knowledge. It is you, but you are not it. You are the one who sees it. It is a great blessing.

Lynda: Although right now it is all very much like that picture of the old lady and the young lady which is one or the other depending on where you focus. I am seeing bits of both and am not sure exactly where to focus – or where to look from, more likely.

James: Focus on the one who sees bits of both. It is you, the knower, the witness.

Lynda: I (I am not sure if this is the little Lynda or the self) am very aware of what the self is not.

James: The self is the one who sees the shifting focus. Identify with the one who sees, not what it seen.

Lynda: In every moment of every day and all situations it is a clear thought that I am none of what is happening. I am not trying to think these thoughts, they just seem to be there all the time. The fact that these thoughts are appearing, and that the thoughts and the thinker are not the self, by inference implies that there is something else observing all of that, which is the self – is this correct?

James: Yes, absolutely. Identify that as yourself and there is nothing more to know.

Lynda: If that is not me and neither is that, etc. I assume that over time, along with the *karma yoga*, it'll all integrate and the identity will be the self and it will not just be a thought anymore? By saying "that is not-self," that is doing, isn't it?

James: Yes, but that is a good doing. If you are doing it, it is important at this stage to keep the knowledge "That is not me" active.

Lynda: But I suppose it is a more knowing doing – and knowing doing should ultimately have less of an impact on the *vasanas* than ignorant doing – is that right?

James: I tip my hat to you, Lynda. You are a very good thinker. It is a knowing doing. If it is just there, then it is self-knowledge. It should stay there until there is no more shifting of attention.

Lynda: Intellectually, I get it, but I am struggling with something I cannot quite work out – maybe the "not being a doer" and still wielding the Vedanta tool at the same time.

James: That's a good doer to be. Who sees you wielding the Vedanta tool? That is "the real you." Actually, there is only one self. It is both the wielder and the knower of the wielder. Ask yourself how you know what you know, in this case the two yous. You, consciousness, knows. There is just a small confusion in your knowledge. Thinking about what I have said here should resolve it.

Lynda: Is there a fair amount of doing when one is still trying to gain confidence in this?

James: Yes. Keep thinking along these lines. Don't be in a hurry to declare victory. Everything is working nicely. Your search is about to end. I can tell by your questions that you are right on track. Good for you!

Lynda: Until the mind, ego and intellect have got it, little Lynda is thinking, musing and using *karma yoga* in order to fully integrate all the teaching so that the mind, ego and intellect see the light?

James: Yes, indeed.

Lynda: My natural inclination is to orientate from what I imagine to be the perspective of the self: that I observe everything that is happening, being thought, done, felt, etc., etc. as though they are not me, or are objects in me. I get the strong sense I am making this area of things more complicated than it is! Do I orientate myself as the self by being aware of what the self is not? Or is there another way to achieve this?

James: See who is aware of Lynda's struggle to "orientate." Let Lynda keep thinking her thoughts, but ask yourself who sees her thinking.

Lynda: Sometimes I can be still and take in everything around me – sounds, smells, feelings, the entire space, and merge into it and then somewhere on the edges of all of that is the space and the silence, which also reaches into my heart.

James: You are the one who sees the "I" being still and the feelings merge into it and who see the space and the silence reaching into your heart. You are the knower.

Lynda: And then there is that full sureness that I spoke of earlier. I could imagine orientating from either of those.

James: Orientate from the knower. You are what sees/knows. It is not specific. It has no location. Everything is located in it, in you. You should get a better sense of it by contemplating what I have said.

Lynda: Maybe I am struggling with not being able to latch onto anything specific – I know that the self is not specific or tangible and is especially not something the mind can grab onto. Perhaps the "imagining" is the issue. What do you suggest?

James: See my previous reply.

Lynda: At one of the *satsangs* you were going to explain intuition to us, but did not get around to

it as the conversation went off in another direction. Could you explain how it works, please?

James: The mind is in a state of pure *sattva* and it sees things as they are.

Lynda: And dreams: Do they have any significance at all?

James: For Lynda they may have some significance. They have no significance to you. You are the light in which the dream appears.

Lynda: I have had two dreams that stand out for me. In one I was standing somewhere urban with a friend whom I could not see, but I knew she was there just behind me, and we were watching the world burn up.

James: The “friend” is the self. It is behind Lynda, the doer. It is the watcher, the witness.

Lynda: Everything burnt up around us, including us, and then it all went black, but I was aware that it was black and that there was nothing at all except the awareness of that (ha, ha).

James: It seems this a dream cooked up by the self to confirm your self-knowledge. The burning world is your ignorance. The black is ignorance. In this dream you are aware of your ignorance. There is nothing but you – awareness – and the ignorance.

Lynda: It was like that for several minutes, then there was a breath, the lights came on and I was in another world, somewhere else. It was brilliant.

James: It is about Lynda’s enlightenment. She is illumined by awareness, you. Dreams can be both prophetic and confirmations.

Lynda: In the other one I was in New Zealand, not having been there ever I still knew that was where I was, with a bunch of people who were friends, in a beach-bar type place, on the beach. I turned around and saw a massive tidal wave coming in and I knew beyond a doubt that we were going to die.

James: The wave is self-knowledge. It wipes everything out.

Lynda: The wave came over us and broke, and I got swirled into it, but as the wave continued over me, at the point where one would imagine you could breathe no more, I found I could still breathe, just in a different way.

James: It means that you are seeing or going to see in a different way. Seeing from the self as the self annihilates the little self, but it “becomes” the self and keeps right on breathing, i.e. living. You live without breathing.

Lynda: And a little while later the water went back and I was left on this hilly area, and everything else was annihilated.

James: The “hilly area” is the self. It provides the overview, the vision of non-duality.

Lynda: I have had these dreams in the last couple of years, so perhaps they have been kicked up by a friendly *vasana* urging me in the right direction?

James: Yes, definitely. You are right on track, Lynda. Not to worry.

Lynda: Anyhow, I look forward to hearing from you and hearing your thoughts when you have some time to reply.

James: I had no time, but when I read this I made time. I love this letter!