

## Two Thoughts at Once?

Ram (James Swartz)

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**James:** Hi, Mark.

Sorry for the delay – same old story – extremely busy. Fame is killing me. I'm about to make a lifestyle shift. In any case, I'm so happy that Vedanta is working for you. The last information I had was that things were a little dicey with the money, etc. It seems *Isvara* has sorted it. Good for you.

**Mark:** I always have troubles finding the words to address you. I love and respect you so much. Thank you for the email and inquiry.

Things have been great except for some rare hiccups (firefly effect). As a result, I have identified that I was lacking in one of the qualifications, so I begun a new *sadhana* to help quiet this mind. *Manasa japa* is giving me a great tool to see the mind as separate from me yet not apart from me. I also use it when the mind begins a train of thoughts I don't feel like entertaining. It's interesting that the mind can still have thoughts while performing *manasa japa*. I thought the mind can only have one thought at a time.

**James:** Well, the "mind" that can have only one thought at a time is the *manas*, a function in the subtle body. The subtle body itself in which the *manas* is a function is the reflected awareness and is itself a thought. So you, awareness, are aware of the subtle body, the reflecting medium, and the specific thought appearing in it at any time. But you don't see two specific thoughts appearing at the same time.

**Mark:** I have started watching the three-*guna* teaching... your delivery and compilation of the teaching is so beautiful, and pure light. "You" look very healthy and radiant. I have such respect for teaching, as I have been teaching for a while and can see how delicate the enfoldment is, when to expand, when to watch your words not to trigger the ego/doubting function of the student, etc. There are times while teaching that I say something I did not know I knew OR put together for the first time. I am a student while teaching.

**James:** The comprehensive knowledge of the *gunas* is about to appear in the form of my latest book in about two weeks. It is the first time in the history of Vedanta that this knowledge has been compiled and expressed as thoroughly and completely. Keep your eyes peeled for it at the website. It will be announced in the next newsletter.

**Mark:** I have also recently received your book *The Yoga of Love*, but am currently finishing *The Holy Geeta* commentary by Swami Chinmayananda. I now have some formal devotional practice that I seem to enjoy, which is something I would not have enjoyed in the past. I do have some difficulties here understanding what's really going on when performing devotion, but once I finish your book I should have a clearer understanding or refined doubts to raise. I sometimes don't see

the point in dualistic devotion, but know that it is needed to lead me to actualization and non-dual love.

**James:** Yes, from a non-dual perspective it seems silly, but this problem is addressed in the book. It boils down to understanding that *satya* and *mithya* are in different orders of reality, so you are not your *jiva*. Devotional practice is for the *jiva*, not for you. But if you know who you are, it is optional. If not, mandatory. My *jiva* loves it.

**Mark:** I humbly offer you my time. *Isvara* has kindly put my life in a position where I do not need to work that much. We live a simple life (in Western terms) and I have just enough cash flow to pay our bills. As a result, I have increased my studies and *sadhana*, but there is a desire in me to donate my time to you and the teaching. If there is something I can assist with, please let me know. My strengths are in IT (information technology). I just pick it up naturally, thanks to *Isvara*, but I can do almost anything.

**James:** Tell me more about your IT skills, Mark.

~ Much love, James