

What Do I Want Now?

Ram (James Swartz)

2013-01-20

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/1004>

John: What do I want now?... to be established in the knowledge. I have new confidence in the scripture, as *pramana*.

I think I can say that I now see that my *vasana* for learning Vedanta a couple of years ago was mixed with serious *rajas*. Recently (the last two months), I finally saw the "*rajas-minus-Vedanta*" *vasana*, so to speak, and essentially dropped the *rajas* and kept the Vedanta, if such a thing is possible. Or more accurately, the *rajas* dropped me, leaving me rolling on the asphalt as the *rajas* car speeds away. So to speak. Sometimes the car seems to turn around and run over my arm with a tire though ☺ - while writing this I had to address a work problem by email.

I am rereading Swami Dayananda's *Vivekachudamani* and listening to your discourses on it. Regarding the second verse, Dayananda says, "The inquiry is a quiet pursuit. The aggressiveness of a go-getter does not work - one has to relax; if one does not, one gets excited and does things that are not at all helpful..."

Here's what happened in the last two years: I was listening to discourses two or three hours a day, learning Sanskrit and had found a local Dayananda-trained *swamini* at a temple nearby(!). I threw myself at that but six months or so later I essentially dropped out, wanting a return to "life." The local *swamini* was very traditional, made lots of emphasis on statues and proper pronunciation of *stotras* and repeated Dayananda jokes; for me, something was not working. Certainly I had not resolved some *rajas*, that only later became apparent. I returned to "life" in the last year-and-a-half and stopped studying Vedanta altogether. I had a job change that was/is a bit of a somersault and had also embarked on a crazy project or two. I think all that "woke me up" ("This is crazy!") but it felt more like I was thrown from the car.

I am newly able to get rid of a lot of physical stuff I had accumulated over past decades related to various *rajas* projects (musical instruments, book collections, that sort of thing). I feel released from that; there is not a struggle in discarding these things. *Viveka-vairagya*.

In the last of couple weeks I have shaken myself off, gone back to the discourses but also doing *manana* and what I understand to be *nididhyasana*. One thing I do now is kind of "fake it till I make it" in my mind. I imagine being happy and okay with any circumstance; I kind of project that in my mind or onto my mind. Overall, I also try to more deliberately absorb what I am hearing and studying by rereading and re-listening, for instance. Rereading Swami Dayananda's *Gita* commentary on *sthita prajna* in Chapter II helps me. Here's a nice passage:

"One has to take care of *raga-dvesas*. Otherwise they are a nuisance. Therefore whatever is to be done to take care of them must be done. This may imply *karma yoga*, listening to the teaching *sravana* or further analysis, *manana*..."

Your words just now are also helpful: "I don't need anything to feel complete and whole except the hard and fast knowledge that I am complete and whole."

The *sattvic* life is again giving immediate benefit at home and in daily life. Swami Dayanada says something about not being a *ninja* in life, not confronting it. I am experimenting with better or more systematically seeing life as not opposed to me. That sometimes takes effort still, in the work/career field especially, but now I see better that seeing life differently (versus simply reacting to it) is a sort of a task or *sadhana*. The teaching is coming together for me in a way it did not before.

I have no regret for what looks like a detour over the past year-and-a-half; it brought up for view what was important to see. I feel "it" (the release from fear and bondage) is getting close, with the disclaimer that on the absolute level there is no bondage at all. I had a (not-so-serious) idea to open a *yoga* studio called The Not-So-Subtle Body. I should do that for myself, practise subtle body postures.

I am so grateful for you and for your teachings, even though I know they aren't your teachings. But knowing there is someone on the other end of a communication is a great help, Ramji.

~ Love, John