

Mind Is Not the Problem

Ram (James Swartz)

2010-11-18

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/1445>

Martin: Dear Ram, I discovered your website two weeks ago through an Advaita friend and have been reading it a lot since then and ordered your book. I am very grateful to you, Ram. I mean the self manifesting through you of course. I even put one of your quotes about “you are whole and complete, actionless, non-dual, etc. awareness” in my wallet. Thank you! And I like the understanding that enlightenment happens in the “mind,” the self being always fine of course. Jean Klein did say that the mind needed to come to know its own limitations so that it would get out of the way. I like and resonate with the advice to practice *karma yoga*.

Thank you! I must admit that I still want to have my cake and eat it too. I still have desire and fear. I try to keep my body in great shape. I try to have money (I used to joke that I needed to have enough money that I could afford to get enlightened, meaning leisure time, love of woman and friends). My mind (or something) has not totally realized that *samsara* cannot give me more than the sum of zero.

I mean to be very sincere and am grateful for this teaching, and wish a *jnani* would walk to my front door, ring the bell, prove he knew everything about me and then guide me quickly to an unending experience of ecstatic bliss (I guess just peace might be fine too).

Anyway, thank you!!!!

Ram: You are most welcome, Martin. Read my book slowly and carefully and sign on to the logic as it unfolds. Vedanta is the big picture and the book presents the essence of Vedanta. It is not an airport read, but considering your background and familiarity with the literature, you should find it very beneficial. It has been very well received by long time-seekers and is in its second printing even though it has been out less than a year.

Yes, enlightenment is for the mind. Jean Klein’s statement is partially correct insofar as the mind needs to understand its own limitations, but it also needs to understand that it is the self. As far as getting out of the way, I don’t exactly know what he meant, but it sounds a bit like *yoga* doctrine although it is impossible to tell what he means exactly without the context.

The mind does not actually stand in the way of the self. Its ignorance of the self and its lack of understanding of its relationship to the self keep it from freedom. So the problem is not getting the mind out of the way or getting rid of it. Ignorance is the problem. The self is already free. The mind needs to be released from of its limiting concepts so it can enjoy freedom. It is a very valuable instrument and very much a part of the solution. When it is exposed to the teachings of Vedanta in a committed way, it can free itself.

Yes, *karma yoga* is essential for anyone seeking enlightenment. It is the means for attaining the kind of clear, calm mind that can understand its nature and retain the knowledge of what it actually is. It is the most powerful spiritual tool because it makes your everyday life into a path to enlightenment. It destroys the

spiritual/worldly duality.

Maybe a *jnani* will walk through your front door one day. Stranger things have happened. Good luck to you and get back to me if you have questions.

~ Love, Ram