

# Experiential Enlightenment Doesn't Last

Ram (James Swartz)

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**Dave:** Dear James, I cannot express how much I appreciate this illuminated teaching that you sent by email. I would be gratified if we can speak one on one through Skype for some more guidance.

I had a *samadhi* experience two years ago after a bus accident and then got a heart attack. That sense of BEING awareness was THERE. IT was unshakable... I thought it could never leave. It was me. Then life carried on and that state started to wane. Then I panicked. Where did the real me go? As if I was taken hostage by *jiva*. So I tried to regain it mechanically... meditating... almost like a kid colouring in his books and connecting the dots hoping for something to happen.

**James:** As you know from experience, enlightenment is not a "state." Or if you prefer to think of it that way, then it is a state that doesn't last, which is not acceptable.

**Dave:** Your teachings have been immensely helpful. You come across as a very unspiritual person, and I mean that in the most complimentary manner. In my world of Dave, I am an entrepreneur, not a New-Age type. I love the world of business and the less I am attached to making money or success, the easier I find it to be.

**James:** Nothing wrong with money, only attachment to it.

**Dave:** It is easy to walk away from transactions that I find morally questionable. I am an observant Jew and I thrill with shivers down my spine when I see the same teachings being taught in Vedanta as in deep Jewish teachings. Religion is an encrusted manifestation of true knowledge... Ossified through ritual which blinds one to the true intention... to gain awareness of the true self. Vedanta is certainly true knowledge. In Hebrew it is called *Daat*.

**James:** True religion is about God-knowledge, alright, but it is indirect knowledge. Vedanta teaches indirect and direct knowledge. Direct knowledge is "God is me." Indirect knowledge is "God exists." It does not negate the ego, the one that knows of God, so it is dualistic. Vedanta negates the ego. It says that there is only God and it is you - but you are not it.

**Dave:** There is a theme that you speak about which resonates deeply. It is that in learning this wisdom from the East, we in the West have mixed in all sorts of Western ideas to create a Neo-Vedanta. Sometimes I see a lot of this Neo stuff as a continuation of the hippie culture, a bunch of angry people who think they are so enlightened.

**James:** Ain't that the truth. Western people are like tourists. They visit Vedanta, pick a few attractive ideas off the shelf and drag them home to proudly display as enlightenment credentials.

**Dave:** So your practical yet pure way of expressing the authentic teachings is something I would like to pursue. It is very important to learn from one who has been part of a chain of tradition of having learned from the masters... and not merely created their own feel-good version of Eastern wisdom.

**James:** Amen!

**Dave:** I have never been into *gurus* but my intuition about the authenticity of your teachings is very powerful.

**James:** Be suspicious of *gurus*, particularly those who do not have a systematic, scientific, impersonal means of self-knowledge – which it turns out is the case with most *gurus*. There is something to be gained from everyone but one should never abandon one's discrimination.

**Dave:** Please email me and I hope I can benefit from your guidance. Can we set up a few Skype sessions?

~ Love from one soul to another