

Squaring Your Life

Ram (James Swartz)

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Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/1871>

Carl: Hi James, I had an odd dream yesterday that I am unable to explain. Also, never had a dream similar to this before.

In this dream I was on a train, and the train goes two ways. One way was to the world and second way was to a forest where all magic and secrets lie. In my dream, as I looked outside I saw a thick group of trees and knew instantly that I was going to the forest where the spirits and fairies reside.

As you know, after *moksa* I hardly dream anymore but this dream felt real in a tangible way. It was pointing me towards something, and I am not sure what it is saying. It seemed that I was supposed to find magic or spirits in the forest that would help me.

James: I assume you mean that “magic spirits” would help Carl, not you. I think the dream is saying that the “magic” in life lies in the self, i.e. the forest, not in the world. The *gurukulas* in the old days were called “forest academies.” It is symbol of the self. Are you having trouble in your marriage or with your career? I think it is saying that the solution to a stale, boring life (assuming your life is stale and boring) is the application of the “forest knowledge” (*arsha vidya*) to the doer. The third stage of life in the Vedic tradition is called *vanaprastha*, “forest wandering.” I think it is saying there is only a spiritual solution, not a worldly one. I can’t imagine what other “help” you might need.

Carl: Thanks James, I believe you are right. I think the dream, now that I have contemplated on it for a while, is saying that I need to follow the path of a renunciant, not in giving up worldly possessions and going to the forest, but to inwardly live the life of the renunciant.

This way there is no separation between the inner and the outer. This is when self-Inquiry begins and the hard work lies ahead. It seems enlightenment is the easy part. Squaring your life with the self is a lot harder.

James: That’s right. But it is good work. Besides, what else are you going to do? As scripture says, “Once you ‘go there’ [i.e. realize you are the self], you can’t go back.” Your goose is cooked.