

The Teacher Is a Friend Supplying a Service

Arlindo Moraes

2016-12-16

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/3108>

Iain: Thanks, Arlindo! Your assistance is very much appreciated.

I have been contemplating something James said on the *Baghavat Gita Tiru 2012* tapes. He speaks of the teachers, the genuine *mahatmas*, who are manifested by the students who are in genuine need of the teaching. A *vasana* on the student's part delivers a teacher sent by *Isvara* to do the business because the student's *karma* has evolved sufficiently, etc.

James spoke of this before in many of his articles I read in the past, and I wonder if you could elaborate on it a little?

Arlindo: Yes, Iain, like everything in the dualistic field of experience – the ever-changing apparent reality called *mithya*, first comes the necessity for a certain adaptation, adjustment, development or service, and there it follows the response, the solution, the answer, the “custom service,” the means for progression. It is a cause-and-effect chain of apparent events science likes to call evolution.

It was the need to inquire to know the nature of the self on the part of the first intelligent human beings that compelled *Isvara* to reveal the scriptures on self-knowledge to *jivas*. Creation is a demand-and-supply game. ☺ A *vasana* for self-inquiry will produce *Isvara's* revealed scriptures and a qualified teacher of self-knowledge.

Vasanas do not impact *Isvara's* creation, but it totally conditions *jiva's* subjective experience of life. In fact *jivas* only experience their own *vasanas* – not only because *vasanas* will keep driving the *jiva* to such objects of fear/desire, but also because *vasanas* will filter/interpret the objects of experience according to their likes and dislikes.

But coming back to the student/teacher business, when the student is ready for self-knowledge (rather than self-experience), *Isvara* will present him/her with the scriptural knowledge and a qualified teacher. The scriptures on Vedanta is the “*gu-ru*” (remover of ignorance). The teacher in our tradition is a friend who facilitates the understanding to the inquirer.

Most of the so-called modern *gurus* are not a “*gu-ru*,” because they do not have the means (a valid teaching) to neutralize or remove *jiva's* ignorance of its own nature. They are at most motivators that will inspire their devotees to somehow look for the self. But the larger majority of the *gurus* are only representations of father-mother figures holding hands of immature *jivas* seeking release from suffering in an experiential manner. In the process a lot of abuse of power will create lots of bad *karma*, such as in your case anger, resentment, revenge – bad *karma* for both the abusing teacher and the misled student. Vedanta is the only *guru* because its science has proven to remove self-ignorance since time immemorial.

Iain: How does Vedanta explain “lesser” teachers? For example, there is this notion in the spiritual world of “all roads lead to Rome” and that the self in all of its

manifestations are all on a journey towards *moksa*, and where one is at one will get the teacher that is right for them at this particular time.

Nagar: Yes, Iain, there are kindergarten teachers, elementary, high school, college – they are all teachers imparting some sort of knowledge or understanding to students. But in the case of teachings on self-knowledge there is a basic error on all other so called “paths to Rome”; they all teach that reality is duality and that by doing certain actions you may get something that you will never lose, and will put an end to your experience of discomfort and dissatisfaction with yourself and life.

Our tradition calls it “a leading error.” They are very misleading teachings, but eventually *jiva* will understand that he is looking in the “wrong direction” and will be led to convert his desire to experience into the desire to know himself as the non-dual self. There is no merit in such teachings except for the fact that some *jivas* will get so frustrated and exhausted that they will give up on their desire to experience the self. At that crossroad sometimes *Isvara* will direct the poor *jiva* to Vedanta.

Iain: In my eyes it’s all very mysterious and a bit serendipity-like, and there is a nice feeling arising that *Bhagavan* (despite it not actually being a God or any kind of personification) is indeed a very benevolent and caring God. Despite all apparent injustice and feelings of not getting what I want (which has caused me incredible grief in the past), it’s just clicked that I’ve always been given exactly what I “need” from *Bhagavan*.

Arlindo: Yes, Iain, *Isvara* is not a “super *jiva*.” *Isvara* is pure *sattva* manifested by the power of *Maya*. It projects the universe into creation the moment *rajas* and *tamas* develop. The beauty of *Isvara* is that, unlike all other creations, IT is not apart from creation itself, and as anything created, it needs some sort of intelligence to govern and operate it – It is all pure knowledge and its laws are precise. The scriptures do not claim to know why creation took place, but it does not matter – the important fact is to know how it functions and the relationship between *jiva*, *Isvara* and *jagatha*. *Isvara* is not a caring or uncaring God – these are *jiva*’s projections – but the way the manifest universe is set up, it seems more like a platform where creatures may evolve by acting out their *karmas*. So you are right: everything that happens is the appropriate opportunity for learning and evolving. Suffering is good for the soul!

Iain: It’s very humbling and it has caused a very deep transformation in my thinking over the last couple of days. I feel very devotional, and extreme gratitude arises, and even when I’m not feeling great I remember to do my *dharma* for the sake of this benevolent force. It’s bringing a tear to my eye writing about it. 😊

Arlindo: Excellent, Iain! That is the attitude of a serious and dedicated *jiva* in pursuit of self-knowledge. Gratitude will transform your desire-driven emotions into devotion for the Lord of this apparent universe. Take everything as *prasad* and your mind will develop all qualities needed for self-knowledge.

Iain: Anyway, my question has really to do with “where do these lesser teachings

and teachers” stand in the big picture? And have my moments of anger and disappointment with certain self-appointed *gurus* in the past been beneficial for me, perhaps in being aggrieved with the *sampradaya* now all else seems to have led me to the conclusion that nothing else really works to remove the suffering? I ask this because I’m still having trouble with one “teacher” who is not enlightened, but tries to teach enlightenment, and who even issued a video to his community with the title *Why I’m an Asshole, and Why I Won’t Ever Change*.

Arlindo: You see Iain, all creatures have their sense organs turned outward. As a result, all creatures develop a huge *vasana* for experience. When they get tired of the world of objects of security and pleasure they go in search of subtle experiences, objects of virtue and betterment. Eventually they seek spiritual objects such as silence, peace, lifting energies, love, emptiness, *samadhi*, epiphanies, etc. We all get the teaching/teacher that we deserve. You are very lucky to have come to Vedanta, and that says much about you.

There is no need for you to be troubled by the abusive teacher you were associated with in the past. I myself have been associated with a few of those – it is all *Isvara*, remember. If they are there it means that they are serving *Isvara*’s purpose. The fact that you are resentful of him indicates that you still think that you can control your environment. It is all *Isvara*! *Jivas* have no control over the world and the people acting in it like puppets on a string. *Jivas* have a responsibility over their actions and their superimposition on *Isvara*’s creation. The way you experience the world is purely dependent on your conscious and subconscious mind. Polish your mind by exposing it to the scriptures and you will experience the world in a very positive, loving and happy way.

Iain: Where he attempted to tell his community that the reason he was an asshole in his videos is because it was for his coaches’ own good. He likened himself to a Zen master who uses a stick to beat ignorance out of the student. Blah, blah, I think you get the picture. It is infuriating, and I’m still angry about this guy and have made many attempts to expose him with detailed and reasoned arguments with him on his forum and comments sections with which he fobs reason and logic off as “reality is illogical and all arguments against me are null and void because there is no such thing as consistency.”

Arlindo: Don’t waste your time, and don’t disturb others with what you consider to be the right or wrong. The spiritual world is filled with such *gurus* and their devotees. They are a good fit for one another. Spirituality is a very lonely process; it is you, contemplating and assimilating your true identity as awareness, by canceling all wrong notions about who you really are. The big *satsang* forums are not interested in self-inquiry and self-knowledge – they are not there for the truth, “*sat*,” they are there for the coziness of the “*sanga*,” and there is nothing right or wrong about that. Let them be, and do not allow these small things to disturb your mind.

Iain: I am trying hard to do inquiry on this; I continue with the *karma yoga* spirit on the emotion, I try to take a stand as awareness and recognize that I have a low self-worth *samskara*, and have given thanks to *Bhagavan* for giving me this guy so I can see my deep issues. But I still can’t shake this person from my emotions and I just create more and more terrible hateful thoughts about him that I can’t seem to

shake. I wonder if you can unpack some meaning to help me deal with this, please.

Arlindo: I hope so too. 😊 To different degrees, every *jiva* lives with this sense of inadequacy – but a *jiva* is a *jiva* – but “you” are the knower, or the witnessing principle, in which the object called “sense of inadequacy” arises and subsides from time to time. Do your *karma yoga*, your *satya-mithya* discrimination and your self-inquiry as presented by Vedanta, and all will be well. You took the Vedanta bus – now sit down and relax. Let the teachings work its magic in your mind. It all happens very rapidly once we keep our focus on the most essential and leave behind all which is trivial. I hope it helps, and good luck! I remain at your service.

~ Arlindo

Iain: Thanks and I look forward to your reply. I read at the website you are moving country. I hope it goes well for you, and please don't rush to reply.

~ Best, Iain