

Low-Hanging Fruit

Ram (James Swartz)

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Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/542>

Steve: Dear Ramji, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the inspiring teaching available at your site, hence the small donation made today. I have downloaded your talks and have been listening to one every evening, purchased your book, which I have been working through slowly and patiently, as advised. I'm also trying to apply *karma yoga* to my every waking moment, offering everything I do, as best I can, to the self. I even attempted your enlightenment quiz and scored 81, which, to be honest, I found amusing, given my current ignorance.

I feel so blessed to have discovered these resources... and they seem to have manifest to me at just the right time. After a couple of epiphanies in my teens led me to question the validity of consensus reality and the values of Western society as a whole, and since the realisation in my mid-thirties that there is only one thing worth knowing (the self), I've been stumbling about the spiritual orchard, plucking low-hanging fruit for over twenty years (I'm now 41), without a guide or any sense of being nearer the goal.

It seems that there's been a burning desire for realisation within me for so long; however, I reached a point about twelve months ago where I was ready to throw a bucket of cold water over the whole spiritual affair! The methods I'd been following only resulted in the occasional far-out experience or two along the way (and a whole bunch of years sitting about watching my breath, etc., etc!) Nice as these epiphanies are, I felt intuitively that they could not be it and that they were temporary and unsatisfying and resulted only in me wanting more of the same thing... a spiritual greed, if you like. Having listened to your talks and read many of your *e-satsangs*, I now understand why!

Also, the search for a qualified teacher kept preying on my mind. I'd never come across anyone who seemed to speak in a way that I could understand, relate to or trust. I invariably found out about scandals, misinformation, manipulation, you know the stuff better than me, and it's caused a few smiles when I've listened to your comments about the whole *guru* business. I live in a remote place in Scotland where we don't have *gurus* visit, and I am hardly a wealthy man, so scooting off to India or wherever and seeking a teacher is pretty much out of my present financial reach! That said, Advaita Vedanta and your teaching has blown everything wide open again and rekindled my flagging spirits, my hope and my trust and desire to know the self. I now see (albeit through a glass, darkly) that what "happens" to me, what I think, want, don't want, etc. has nothing to do with the self, that I am whole and complete and eternal. I will continue with the *karma yoga* and listening to and reading the book and polishing that dark glass.

So if any of the above causes a response or observations to arise in you, I would be so grateful for any pointers, advice or criticism. If not, then that's just fine too.

~ Love, thanks and kind regards, Steve Hughes

Ramji: Dear Stephen, all of the above causes me to respond to your lovely and beautifully-written email. First, appreciation is much appreciated. I have put my

whole life into Vedanta, and it is gratifying to see that the way I express my understanding is helpful to others. Secondly, I am genuinely happy for you. Those low-hanging fruit don't quite cut the mustard, to mix metaphors. So I am glad that it has reignited your desire for freedom. I am not surprised that it came to you once you had given up the seeking. It was the same with me and many with whom I come in contact. No, I don't have any particular advice except to advise you to stick with the Vedanta. It works. But it is not low-hanging fruit. You have to climb to the top of the tree where the sun shines in all its glory and produces two fruits, love and wisdom, that are in fact one. If you get stuck, please write and I will see if I can be of service.

~ All the best, Ramji