

Show Me the Ashes, I'll Show You the Phoenix

David: This giving up is a very powerful thing. Everybody has had a chance to give up on one thing or another. Even giving up on forms of resistance—like you've resisted cleaning up your closet for a long time, and then you give up on resisting cleaning up your closet, and miraculously enough, but understandably when you think about it, your closet gets cleaned. Well, you clean it. But you couldn't have cleaned it prior to giving up on the fact that you were unwilling to clean it.

This giving up has opened a lot of doors for people, not just closed doors. And that's key. Skeleton key. And so then, giving up is so potent that in the end, you find out that giving up *is* the way. And you find out that you want to be a phoenix.

And the guru says, "Well look: You show me the ashes, I'll show you the phoenix."

"Well shit, ashes don't amount to much, Swamiji, why would you give me a phoenix in exchange for ashes?"

And he says, "Well the thing is, the ashes are all that's against being a phoenix."

In other words, if what is in the way of the phoenix is not burned up, then where are we going to get our phoenix? So when one gives up, that which was in the way of the phoenix is now ashes. Right? Ashes to ashes, must to dust. Ashes to ashes, lust to dust. Ashes to ashes, bust to dust. "Show me the ashes, I'll show you the phoenix." Well, it's a bargain.

So, you got all kinds of friends. You know what you're waiting for them to give up on. Individually. That's because you're their friend and you know them very well. In fact you even know that about yourself. (gasps!) You know that. So therefore, you see, you recognize what the phoenix is waiting on in terms of what needs to be given up. And you know that if you show yourself the ashes, God will show you the phoenix.

And everybody knows it: When you try a relationship the way you used to try a relationship, when you do things the way you used to do things, when you do things in the way that's always been a problem, why it'll be a problem again for you. And then you can chalk that up on your failure list and go again. Right?

Now, people are always trying to refine their list of how it's going to work more perfectly. You see this in the dating circuit: that a girl, says, "I need a man with an education." So she gets a man with an education. He turns out to be a jerk. So she goes, "I need a man with an education and a sense of humor." She's refined her list. And she gets a man with an education and a sense of humor, and that bombs. Then she goes, "I need a man with a sense of humor and likes pina colodas and walks on the beach." That doesn't work. "Likes the right same kind of music." Right? And every round goes lower, lower, soldiers of the cross. And each one, more and more refined, and silly. All amounting to nothing.

Here's what you have to do: I recommend she add one more item, and that would solve everything, and it would complete her fulfillment. And that is: It not be an ego project, this relationship. It not be for personal gain.

So, if you check off that box, then everything's on. Because she is the phoenix, and what is the phoenix? The phoenix is the one who's been stripped bare of its attempt to make a project out of love. Right? And because of that, the love is no longer egoized. And because it's not, the phoenix can fly. The relationship can work. A relationship that is not somebody's project can work.

The walking dead is the phoenix. The one who gave up is the phoenix. The one who is not trying to make themselves succeed by egoic means in order to get egoic gains is the phoenix. Right? That one can and will succeed. Everything they touch turns to gold. Except if it doesn't want to be gold....

So you surrender to the way it is *as* the way you are. And then you're surrendered. Or, you fight against the way it is as the one you are not, and then you're not surrendered, and you're also not existing. That is to say, you are not existing as you are. Right? You show me the ashes, I'll show you the phoenix. But no tickee, no laundry; no ashes, no phoenix. *Everybody* wants to find the phoenix. *Nobody* wants to die. Well, that's a contradiction in terms. You have to die to the ego in order to be born again in the spirit. Well it's true. No give-uppee, you see, still fucked-upness. Right? No surrender, still war.

Okay, so war goes on until surrender happens. Right? We're never going to get success until we give up. Especially give up on our tremendous investment in what can never work and has never worked. If we are really busy doing that, then we have a busy tone where God's calling. "I'm busy getting ready for you, God." Or, "I'm busy doing something completely irrelevant to that." Whatever. It doesn't matter, the person's busy anyhow. And they're doing stuff about everything. Right? And therefore, they're stuck in an endless round of failure and heartbreak, because none of it can ever work.

The conclusive giving up is the amalgamation of the lessons of all failures into a sense of a giant failure, and then a giving up which is a conclusive and giant giving up on all that is seen not to work. Right?

So you have the private or the specific individual case of something that didn't work. And then out of that Private is promoted to a General. "None of it works," says the General. "None of these things. Nothing even remotely similar to this. No iterations that have any similar root in my own egoity will work." And that is the generalization of experience. That's when we really learn, when we get the ability to generalize, rather than going after another one that's actually just like the other one, failed, except different, and therefore we're thrilled that it's different. Like sense of humor added on to education. Or if I did it this way, then this would surely be a hope or a new possibility. And then finding out that nothing similar can work if the thing it's similar to also does not work.

The question is, when will the person be able to see the handwriting on the wall—"None of this works"—so that they can give it up, so that they can go to ashes in their prodigal entrepreneurship or misadventure, so that the phoenix can rise again? "You show me the ashes...", you see?

So if anybody comes to the Rolls Royce dealer, "I like that car," the guy says, "Fine. Show me the money."

You go to the teacher, and you say, "I want to rise as a phoenix, I want to love all and be fantastic and everything else."

He says, "Fine. Show me the ashes. Where's the ashes? I'll show you the phoenix."

So that's what we mean by giving up. Whatever little enterprise you give up on, you can be released from that. But if you start another one just like it, now you're stuck on that one. If you start another one just like that one, you're stuck on that one. See? And you get to fail in all of them, so you're forced to give up on each individual one.

But what *about* the pattern? Does anyone see it? Does anyone see that these things are similar? That what caused them to fail is the same thing? You see? If they *see* that, then they've gone from that Private to that General. And they're able to draw a conclusion from life which is conclusive. Instead of drawing a little tiny conclusion about a little tiny no-way, they're able to draw a big huge conclusion about the entire no-way. Show me the ashes of the entire no-way and I'll show you the entire phoenix. Otherwise, we just have a little jerk standing up, dusting themselves off, and going about doing the same idiot *type* of thing that he

always did, that always never worked and won't work this time. Can't work. Never work. Right?

So waiting for Godot¹, for success to be the ship that comes in, in a station where there is no inbound traffic.

*“Give me some information: Where is the 5:05?
No inbound trains reach this station.
How long have you been alive?
It never comes.”*

It never comes.

*“So cold is a waterless fountain.
The skies are all stony gray.
The birds flew away to the mountain.
I threw my seeds away...”*

Because it never comes.

When you get to that point where you realize that, you have made an enlightened generalization about egoic existence. It never comes. I'm throwing my seeds away in the pursuit of its objectives. Everything I put into it is at best waste and forever heartbreaking, because it never comes. It only goes away. It never comes! It only goes away. It *never* comes.

That's a generalization, you see? That's liberating, because if you realize that, then you will be the phoenix. Out of the ashes of what you thought you were and what you operated as and strove as and efforted as, arises the phoenix of what you are. Like a butterfly comes out of a cocoon and flies away. Out of the ashes.

So these are the lessons of experience. We're all learning the same lesson. Whenever we think it's enough, we'll put up the white flag of surrender, we'll turn over our arms, and we'll be spirited away to heaven. You see what I mean? As a person who is liberated from hopeless enterprise by giving up. Not just liberated from that one little striving to get educated men who have a sense of humor, three in a row, it didn't work. Not educated men who have a sense of humor and like Heavy Metal or Megadeath. Not anything like that, only slightly different. But the entire psychology, the entire failing psychology of the effort at self-fulfillment by means of personal striving, which includes every form of idiocy—like being

¹ “Waiting for Godot” refers to a famous play by that name, in which two characters wait indefinitely for someone named Godot, and keep waiting even after they are told that he is not coming.

drunk all the time, like being pissed off all the time, like being a stalker, you know? Like being a person, you see, as one would conceive oneself to be. That kind of person, you see? Like sadhana. Like self-improvement. Like thinking about it. Like not being willing to think about it. All the things that will never work.

“Told me I should phone, but I got a busy tone.” The person was busy enterprising through their lives. They were busily engaged in their becoming, and their numbing, and even just humming. But it was all enough to drown out the Still Small Voice. It was all enough to get them away from reality. It was all enough to be totally vacuous and incapable of success or good result, truly good result. Right? It all was. *That* is what needs to be seen for there to be a conclusive giving up, a giving up that is different than all the little giving ups, in that it’s giving up on everything that that was. This time it’s not keeping the demon seed intact of the whole idea that I can do it, I will do it, I will improve myself, I will make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear. I will surrender in some tiny and ultimately inconsequential ways, when in fact what I need to do is simply surrender. Right?

But the person’s going to pick out their next target of surrender. Like you know, two years ago you gave up chewing gum. But now you feel emboldened, so you’re going to give up salt. Well, that’s good, how many things are left? And you’re giving up one of these things at two-year intervals, think of however many are left, multiply it by two. And that’s how long it’ll take you to give up everything. Well geez, you know, that’s like taking life one day at a time. I always say, take at least a week at a time. Otherwise, you’ll never get anywhere. If you don’t batch process shit, this individual giving-upness is a very, very long row to hoe, like way over the next mountain range.

So therefore, batch processing comes in handy. You know, we need to basically zap the hard drive and reboot. Right? It’s not a question of correcting the errors in your letter to your Mom. It’s more like take the computer, plug it in, fill the bathtub, throw it in. Make sure it’s still plugged. Then throw it in. Now we’re really getting somewhere with some of these errors on this hard drive.

So now you know all about giving up. What it is and what really isn’t it.

Fade to black, play song: “It’s Only Outbound”