

## New to Non Duality?

By Sundari



Vedanta is the science of non-duality. It is not a religion or a philosophy nor is it based on the ideas of a single person or person's beliefs or opinions. It is therefore called an independent and valid means of self knowledge. It stands alone because it is based on pure logic, pure knowledge. It was revealed by consciousness to certain wise people thousands of years ago (*rishis*). It is intended for those whose minds are prepared to understand it. It is not subject to debate because it is just the impersonal logic of everyone's unexamined experience.

The word Vedanta means "the knowledge that ends the quest for knowledge". It says that because reality is non-dual only self knowledge, not experience or a special enlightenment experience, can free you of erroneous beliefs about who you think you are.

Vedanta proves that reality is a non-duality, not a duality. It conclusively resolves the subject-object split, showing that there is only one principle operating here, not two as is commonly believed. That one principle is consciousness or awareness...referred to as "the self"...out of which all the objects that we experience arise. Science is not far from proving this principle to be true, although it is still not widely accepted in either the scientific community or the world at large.

It says that you are impersonal consciousness, not the limited person you think you are. Is it not obvious that you are conscious? Was there ever a time when you were not conscious? If that were possible, you would have to have been present to know that you were not conscious, wouldn't you? Or, the body would dead.

Who knows what you are thinking, feeling and doing, at all times? It will have occurred to you at some time that something operates "in you" that knows you. That 'you', the silent watcher, is called the non-experiencing witness and is your true nature. It is limitless consciousness. It does not experience but it knows what you are experiencing at all times. Without it, the person you think are you cannot experience anything. This you remains 'after' death because consciousness was never born and never dies. It is prior to everything.

To suggest that most of us are not totally identified with our bodies, thoughts, feelings and actions is ludicrous. Vedanta calls this identification self ignorance, not stupidity. Your true nature is unlimited, unchanging, whole and complete, non-dual, actionless awareness. This ignorance is the cause of all suffering, because it causes people to believe in duality and to chase objects in the vain attempt to complete themselves. No object can do the job. They can only provide temporary relief from desire.

When you get what you want, pretty soon you are off chasing another object in the vain hope that it will really do the job! It does not take a rocket scientist to realize that this does not work. Look at all the people who are frantically chasing things: relationships, money, status, security, comfort, pleasure, distraction...you name it.

Does anyone really gain lasting happiness through objects? Even if you find the love of your life and you genuinely love each other for the rest of your lives, someone will die first. Where is the happiness then? If you win the lottery and can have whatever object your heart desires, is this a guarantee of happiness? It may just as well guarantee bondage and misery.

There is temporary joy in objects, but no lasting joy. The joy that comes from obtaining an object comes because the pressure of desire...of the chase...is temporarily halted. When this happens it seems like the joy is comes from the object. But it never does.

If objects were really the source of joy, then the same object would give the same joy to everyone, but it is clear that they do not. Look at the obvious ones, like relationships and money. Do they make everyone equally happy?

So where does the joy come from? Vedanta says that the joy only ever comes from you, consciousness awareness, the self. You are the joy; it is not something you can gain or lose, it is your true nature.

But the belief in duality tricks us into believing that we are small, inadequate and limited. The conclusion? You better do your level best to get everything you want or you will never be happy! Does that work? Is there evidence to support the belief that objects really are capable of making you happy? How long does object happiness last?

So how to find a lasting happiness that no-one can give you or take away from you? By realising your true nature, who you really are. What everyone is chasing is really the self, limitless awareness. Consciously seeking to know the self is the journey to freedom from the wrong notion of who you really are. Vedanta is the ticket to freedom.