

Are *Vishwa* and *Jiva* Different?

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Giselle: I did get your email and have been mulling it over. I had some questions that I hadn't gotten a chance to write to you about, so here goes. I think I'm still confused about how the *vishwa* and *jiva* are different. It sounds as if there really is no difference between the *vishwa* and *jiva*, as they are the same terms applied to the waking state entity, which has its attention externalized. Is that correct?

Sundari: There is only awareness, which when *maya* is operating manifests as a *jiva*, awareness identified with the subtle body. The *jiva* is the generic individual. There are three states or roles that the *jiva* experiences: the waking, dream and deep sleep state.

These three states are always present for the *jiva*. The *jiva*, or waking state entity (*vishwa*), can be extroverted and aware of objects outside (meaning the world) or it can be introverted (*taijasa*) and aware of its thoughts and feelings; the *jiva* can also be aware of the bliss of the causal body (*prajna*), all while awake. Therefore for the *jiva* there is the waking state of the waking state, the dream state of the waking state and the deep sleep state of the waking state.

The *jiva* as *vishwa* refers only to the waking state entity with its attention totally externalized and directed towards objects.

The *jiva* as *taijasa* refers only to the dream state whether the *jiva* is awake or asleep because the subtle body is turned inwards observing the thoughts and feelings (*vasanas*) as they arise from the causal body.

The *jiva* as the deep sleep entity, or *prajna*, only refers to the *jiva* who is experiencing undifferentiated consciousness, or the bliss of the causal body and the absence of objects. This can be experienced in deep sleep, or awake, such as in *nirvilkapa samadhi*.

Giselle: I'm also not clear about the lucid dreamer. In my experience I've been able to realize that I'm in a dream and then direct the dream from there or just enjoy being "awake" in the dream. Who is awake? The *jiva* or is that simply awareness identified with itself enjoying the show?

Sundari: Lucid dreaming can happen when the *jiva* is awake or asleep because neither the waking nor the dream states are real. When your thoughts are completely *sattvic* you are lucid, clear. You don't call it lucid dreaming in the waking state because your gross sense instruments are operating and you think you are awake whereas in the dream the external senses are not present and only the subtle organs of perception are working.

If in the waking state you are lost in your thoughts and your attention is turned inwards only aware of your thoughts and feelings then you are in the dream state.

In the dream state the *jiva* as a doer either directing the dream or enjoying the dream state is the

reflected self because awareness is not a doer or enjoyer. But the knowledge of directing the dream means that awareness is present illumining *taijasa*, which is how you are conscious of the dream.

The deep sleep state is the “absence of things” therefore in deep sleep, as in *nirvikalpa samadhi*, only awareness remains and since objects are absent only awareness is available to be known. It cannot be said that there is ignorance of objects in deep sleep because there is no possibility of being aware of the absence of objects in deep sleep. This is because awareness of the absence of objects would imply objects being present – meaning a mind – which is by definition an experience not available in deep sleep. Therefore all that is available in deep sleep is awareness aware of itself.

To quote James: “Deep sleep is ignorance, just as the waking and dream states are ignorance, the effects of *maya*. Deep sleep is a state in which the self appears as *prajna* wrapped up in experiential bliss. All three *jivas* are ignorant of the self in their respective states, except those waking state *jivas* whose self-ignorance has been removed, i.e. *jnanis*. It is the identification with the state that they experience that makes *jivas* ignorant.”

~ Sundari