

Awareness Aware of Itself

Ram (James Swartz)

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Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/204>

Piers: After the retreat that I went on (as you know) I rebelled somewhat at everything (or my thinking did, at any rate).

James: That is great, shows Vedanta is working. It is definitely provocative.

Piers: Then I got your book in the post (*Meditation*). The bit that reignited my enthusiasm was the fact that in your book you made reference to silence, which I find very easy to “get to.”

So recently I've been sitting half an hour in the morning, half an hour in the evening, having prayed for enlightenment, and keeping my attention on the silence.

I am the silence. That is clear. What is also clear is that the silence that I am is the thread that runs through everything; the one thing that is unchanging and always there.

But I also appear to be looking in on silence. (That's about the best way I can put it. I have my eyes closed and what I see is nothing, or emptiness. Blackness, anyway. No golden lights or any of that.)

So if I am silence, and I am observing silence, is this what is meant by “awareness being aware of itself”?

James: Got it in one, Piers! Go to the head of the class. Seriously, this is good thinking. You are definitely on the right track.

Piers: Also, I read in one of the *satsangs* at the website about this “cosmic sound.” Prior to the silence is this sound, which is also always there, which at first appears to be silence, but is in fact a high-pitched, dog-whistle/hissing/white noise kind of an affair. It is not silence, but it is always in silence. I am not putting my attention on it, I am putting my attention on the absolute silence, the silence that I am, so I am asking you this out of curiosity: Is this the “cosmic sound” or have I just got something wrong with my ears after twenty years playing obscenely loud rock and roll music?

James: I didn't spend twenty years playing obscenely loud rock music and I hear it too. I hesitate to give these things names, but the short answer is yes. Different minds “hear” (read: interpret) it differently. In any case it is just another object in awareness, ephiphenomena actually, and no need to make a fuss over it. Keep up the good work!

Piers: Anyway, I have found putting my attention on the silence very easy to do, and very beneficial. I would appreciate your feedback, just in case I'm going wildly off track.

By the way, I've just discovered your blog on Advaita Academy. Awesome, dude.

James: Appreciation is always appreciated. Take care of yourself.

~ Love, James