

Awareness, God and the World

Ram (James Swartz)

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Dear Ram Here is a statement from your commentary on *Tattva Bodh*. "The power by which the Self appears to be the body and mind is called *Maya*. Because this is a non-dual reality composed only of limitless Awareness, the Self, this power resides in the Self. When the Self operates this power and produces the apparent reality, the world of experience, it is termed God, the creator. When it identifies with the three bodies it is called the individual (*jiva*). Essentially the individual and God are the same because both are Awareness, but there is also a difference. The individual is under the control of *Maya* and can only create a personal world out of its thoughts but God controls *Maya* and creates the material world."

If God is the world, as you say, that means God is created. Everything that is created is created by the power of *Maya*. So how can God control *Maya* if He is created by *Maya*? How can the effect be in control of the cause?

Ram: Good reasoning. You are right. If God is an effect of *Maya* It cannot control *Maya*. God is actually personification of an impersonal principle, *Maya*. Anyway, I'll try to make this more clear. This is a very subtle point, one that revolves around the meaning of words. From the Self's point of view there is no God, no individual, and no creation. But from the individual and the creation's point of view something had to cause them because in the creation you do not find an effect without a cause. We see the world and ourselves in it and we know that we did not create this so to satisfy our need to know we give a name to the one who creates. . . God.

Maria: And: If God is the creation, who is the creator?

Ram: A spider is both the creator of its web and the web itself. So in this way God supplies both the intelligence to shape the substance of the creation and the substance too.

Here are other words that say the same thing: The Self is the world but only in its capacity as God. It is a role that the Self assumes. God and *Maya* are one and the same like the web that is in the spider. *Maya* is just an impersonal word for God. *Maya* is just the Self with reference to the totality of the apparent universe. In fact there is no world here unless you understand the world to be pure Awareness. What you call the world is just Awareness seen through the prism of ignorance. The words total and individual are ignorance. However if you understand the teaching you will see that what you call God and the individual are just Awareness.

I hope this clears it up. Love Ram