

Beyond *Isvara*

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Robert: Again, much gratitude and love to you both. Thank you ever so much for this!

Yesterday I went fishing, and on the drive out something clicked. It is impossible for me to be a doer! Ha, how **ridiculously simple** that truth is!

And the *jiva* is the “apparent” doer created out of the *gunas* and all that that entails belongs to *Isvara*, and I am beyond *Isvara*.

Sundari: Yes, indeed! The truth is so simple and so subtle it is impossible for the mind to understand until the intellect has been purified by self-knowledge.

If you just use common sense and think through how many factors that have to be in play to do anything – like get out of bed in the morning, walk across a room or even smile, it is totally clear that the constituents of action are not up to the *jiva*. *Isvara* is doing it all, yet *Isvara* is not a doer either. Doing happens as a result of the *gunas*. Without self-knowledge one is totally run by the *vasanas/gunas* and at the mercy of the ruthless *karmic* cycle, drowning in the unpredictable and ever-changing ocean of *samsara*. Knowing this, one can only have compassion for any mind still under the spell of ignorance. From this perspective, which is the perspective of the self and the only sane way to look at life, applying this knowledge to the *jiva*'s story, forgiveness is not only natural, it is an act of compassion to the *jiva*. One understands firstly there is only the self, and secondly how much pain everyone is in without self-knowledge and under the whip of their *vasanas*. Here the doer dissolves, as it is clear that all doing is being done by the *gunas*.

Well done to you for seeing that as awareness you are beyond *Isvara*. It is important to remember that although *Isvara* wields *maya*/ignorance (*gunas*) *Isvara* is never deluded by *maya*. *Isvara* is awareness plus *maya* in the role of Creator and shares the same identity as the *jiva*, i.e. awareness. However, enlightened or not, the *jiva* is subject to *Isvara*'s universal laws and *dharmas*.

The question is: What is the relationship between *jiva* and *Isvara*? *Jiva* can't see a world that appears to be “out there” unless it is aware, and *Isvara* can't create the whole objective world unless it is aware. We know that *Isvara* is aware because its creation is intelligently designed: it all hangs together perfectly, all appearances to the contrary notwithstanding when looking at life in general! **All unhappiness and suffering is not caused by *Isvara* but by ignorance of *Isvara*.**

There is essentially no difference between *jiva* and *Isvara* except in their capacity to create. *Isvara* creates the objective world and *jiva* creates the subjective world. They both appear to be conscious because consciousness is the common denominator. This is why Vedanta says they are “essentially” the same. If this is true, then we can eliminate both *jiva* and *Isvara* as real and take ourselves to be consciousness.

We can eliminate them as real because their capacities are different and neither of them is

always present. *Ishvara* in the role of Creator is infinite with reference to the *jiva*, but not with reference to awareness, because *Ishvara* in the role of Creator goes unmanifest at the end of the creation cycle. The same applies to the *jiva* because although the universal *jiva* is infinite in that it is really awareness, it only appears as a subtle body (a person) when *maya* manifests. *Ishvara* is not a person with likes and dislikes (not modified by ignorance or the *gunas*) and the creator of everything, whereas *jiva* thinks it's a person, has likes and dislikes (is modified by the *gunas*) and cannot create anything. The sun, moon and the stars, the beating of its heart, the ability to walk or smile or do anything is thanks to *Ishvara*. ***Jiva* only creates its subjective reality.**

And we can eliminate both *Ishvara* and *jiva* because neither *Ishvara*'s creation nor *jiva*'s creation hides consciousness. It is always present prior to the creation and prior to the birth of individuals, or subtle bodies. You can't have a macrocosmic creation without consciousness. Something had to exist before *Ishvara* could "bang" the creation into existence. That something we call *paramatma*, pure consciousness, free of both *Ishvara* as Creator and *jiva*.

Consciousness – me – is never affected by *Ishvara*'s creation or by *jiva*'s creation. It is the knower of both.