

The Knower of the Self

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2016-06-04

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/2756>

Narendra: Ted Schmidt-ji, I have some book knowledge about the non-duality teaching. I have read the books of SW Chinmayananda, JK Krishnamurti, Nisargadatta Maharaja and Atmananda Krishna Menon.

Now I am reading the James Swartz' book *How to attain Enlightenment*. In the introduction it says, "The knower of self and the object of knowledge are the same." "Knower of self" – what does that mean? Would you please explain it?

~ Thanking you, Narendra Chandran

Ted: Hi, Narendra.

The knower of the self is the apparent individual person – the relative knower. Though the all-pervasive non-dual self cannot be known as an object, its limitless nature is apprehended in a *sattvic*, or pure, intellect – i.e. a mind that is free of binding *vasanas*, or compelling likes and dislikes, that extrovert its attention and prevent it from "seeing" that awareness is the *adhishtanam*, or substrate, of all the objective phenomena, both subtle and gross, that appear within the scope of its perception. When such an intellect is exposed to the teachings of Vedanta through which the implied meaning of the words of scripture is revealed, it is led beyond the limiting parameters of the subject-object/knower-known dichotomy to the realization of the essential identity of these two seemingly different entities. In other words, through the teachings of Vedanta the mind is led to the realization that just as two waves in the ocean are both water or two golden ornaments are both gold, both the relative knowing subject and the related known object are simply two manifestations of the same fundamental reality – limitless conscious existence. From the ultimate perspective, reality is non-dual, and thus the self, the knower of the self and the object of knowledge are one and the same. But since from the relative perspective self-knowledge takes place in the intellect of the apparent individual, the apparent individual is the knower of the self.

~ All the best, Ted