

Understanding *Isvara* Is the Doorway to *Moksa*

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Sarah: You are remarkable. *Isvara* is conscious and objects (such as *jivas*) are not conscious.

That is why a *jiva* is an inert counter over which *Isvara* apparently transacts business. That is why a *jiva* is *Isvara*, and the *jiva*, appearing to be conscious, is a superimposition. Thinking from this angle makes it possible to see oneself as *Isvara*. This is good news... is this correct?

Sundari: Thanks, Sarah. Yes, you are correct. From “this” point of view you are speaking as the self “seeing” with non-dual vision.

The *jiva* is inert, no more real than your shadow or reflection in the mirror. It remains limited purely as the *jiva* “enlightened” or not, even though the essence of the *jiva* is awareness, which is unlimited.

To self-actualise, one must understand one’s conditioning (*vasanas*/likes and dislikes) in the light of the *gunas* to render the binding *vasanas* non-binding and to negate the doer. In order to understand what “non-dual” means, one has to understand the identity between *maya-Isvara-jiva* both from the perspective of their common denominator, awareness, **and** from the perspective of the *jiva* who remains in the apparent reality. There is NO getting around this.

Understanding that you are a person and what it means to be a person is pretty simple. Understanding that your true identity is awareness and not the person with a name and a story is also not that hard; after all, it is pretty obvious, **provided** the mind is qualified. Where most people get stuck is understanding what that *means for the person*.

The Neo-Advaitins and many others have tried to skip this part by simply saying that the person and the objects do not exist. But they **do** exist. You experience them. Without knowledge of the *gunas/Isvara* one will never understand the field of existence, the environment, or *dharma* field, and how the *jiva* relates to it, so there is no way to be free of it.

So, what does existence mean? What does “apparently real” really mean? It is the contention of Vedanta (and the logic of one’s own experience when examined in the light of self-knowledge) that only awareness is real, meaning that which is always present and never changes. All objects subtle or gross are only apparently real, meaning not always present and always changing. Self-knowledge/self-realisation means knowing that all objects arise from you, awareness, are made up out of awareness but you are always free of the objects. *Moksa*, or freedom, for the *jiva* is the discrimination of the objects from you, awareness, and to never confuse the (apparent) two again. As said many times, freedom means liberation from the idea of being a person in order that as a person you live as the self, free of suffering. The person never leaves the apparent reality. The self is already free.

The buffer, what stands in between (so to speak, because there really is nothing “in between” from awareness’s point of view) is *Isvara*, the causal body. Even though as awareness you share a common identity with *Isvara* and the *jiva* but are always free of and “beyond” both *Isvara* and

the *jiva*, the *jiva* lives in the apparent reality, and in order to live free of it, as stated many times now, it has to understand what it is in the light of self-knowledge. No other knowledge will do the trick.

This is why we say there is no escaping *Ishvara*. Yes, you can say you are *Ishvara* and beyond *Ishvara* until you are blue in the face, but unless you know what this means you will not be free. *Ishvara srsti*, or the creation – the environment, from which the *jiva* cannot be separated – is a lawful universe, run by *Ishvara*'s psychological and material order (the *gunas*), this is **Svadharm**a – with a big “S” – and enlightened or not, the *jiva* is subject to these laws.

This is why we promote a devotional attitude towards *Ishvara* because in doing so one acknowledges the logic of *karma yoga* at all times, rendering the binding *vasanas* non-binding and negating the doer. *Ishvara* (the *gunas*) is the only “doer.”