

Why “Seeing” the “Light” of Awareness Makes the *Jiva* Happy

Ted Schmidt

2016-05-02

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/2728>

Carl: Hi, Ted.

Quick question: contemplating “the joy is not in the object,” I understand that the object is inherently empty, and once the desire for the object has been fulfilled, the mind becomes calm and the “light” of awareness is able to be reflected, and that’s what makes one happy, not the object. But why does “seeing” the reflection of the “light” of awareness make the *jiva* happy? As awareness is without attributes, then the joy is still an object, albeit a very enjoyable object!

~ Happily awaiting your response, Carl

Ted: Hi, Carl.

Good question. It gets right to the heart of the matter.

Seeing the “light” of awareness reflected in the mind makes the *jiva* happy because there are no limitations or obstructions present in limitlessness. Therefore the *jiva* experiences the freedom that is its true nature, and the nature of this freedom just so happens to translate experientially as bliss, unbounded joy.

As you so rightly point out, however, neither the reflection of awareness (i.e. apprehension of limitlessness) nor the resultant experience of joy is *sat-chit-ananda atma* (i.e. the self, whose nature is limitless conscious existence) itself, for the self is not an “it.”

The apprehension of limitlessness that arises in the mind is referred to as *akhandakara vritti* (i.e. “the thought without limit” or “the thought of limitlessness”). When the mind is sufficiently *sattvic* (i.e. free of binding desires that cause it to be transfixed on the objective phenomena arising within it, and thus unable to apprehend the “light” by which these phenomena are illumined) it serves as a “mirror” that is smooth and clean enough to register an accurate reflection of the limitless nature of awareness. Though the reflection is a thought and not awareness itself (other than from the ultimate non-dual perspective in which there is known to be nothing other than awareness), because the mind is sufficiently unmodified the reflection is basically as good as the original, and thus we apprehend our true nature.

This apprehension is as close as the mind gets to “seeing” or “knowing” the self.

And while the *akhandakara vritti* eventually goes, as all thoughts inevitably do, the knowledge it has revealed remains when object *vritti* (i.e. thoughts of objects) reappear. Thereafter the content of the objective forms is known to be awareness, and awareness is known to be the fundamental reality, and the fundamental reality is known to be non-dual (for whatever is the fundamental reality must be the same fundamental reality of all that is, otherwise it would not be the fundamental reality), and thus that fundamental reality is known to be the self.