

The Causal Body

Ram (James Swartz)

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Mark: Dear James, in your new book you write extensively about the causal body. You say, “The causal body is opinionated and overconfident and seems to know what is happening irrespective of the indeterminacy of a given situation. The subtle body is less confident, owing to its doubting function, and it will usually allow the dogmatic and hastily-constructed intuitions of the causal body to determine its reactions.

“The causal body looks like a memory because it recycles experience, but it has no memory. It is incredibly present and aware, as it is ever-present, eternal awareness in its original form. Because it is the source of desire and fear, it causes the subtle body to jump to conclusions...”

My question: What exactly do you mean by saying that the causal body is eternal awareness in its original form?

James: Awareness is formless. When *maya* is operating, the causal body comes into being first, then the subtle and gross bodies. So the causal body is the original or first form.

Mark: Okay, everything is awareness, but being opinionated, being the repository of the *vasanas*, etc. how can it be awareness in its original form? Wouldn't awareness in its original form be *nirgunaha*, free of attributes, *paramatma*?

James: No. Awareness free from attributes is *brahman*, *paramatma*. It is *nirguna*. Awareness with attributes is *Isvara*. It has the three *gunas*, the five elements, etc. These are attributes.

When I use the words “opinionated” and “overconfident” I am personifying to contrast it to the subtle body which doubts and whose opinions are just biases based on the heuristic nature of the causal body which simplifies the vast amount of data that *Isvara* presents to awareness. If the *jiva* had to process all the information that *Isvara* is designed to process it would go mad. Its subtle body is limited. So *Isvara* as the causal body simplifies the information so *jiva* can handle it. Unfortunately, in the process a lot of the nuances are discarded and *jiva*'s decisions and actions are not fully informed – so it suffers.

This is a very subtle topic and if you still have questions, please write.