

# Vedanta Is the Third Eye

Ram (James Swartz)

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**James** (from a previous discussion): “Okay, but you can’t really change your perspective to that of the non-experiencing witness, because it is you before you make any changes. In other words, the words ‘non-experiencing witness’ just points to you. And the one who changes cannot see from the platform of the non-experiencing witness because it is limited and inert.”

**Mike:** A few points to clarify my thinking here. Let’s move “Mike” out of the picture since it is irrelevant for the purposes of this conversation. The “I” is awareness, not the subtle body.

A. As mentioned in *Tripura Rahasya*, the link between the subtle body and the self, even though it is active, is constantly shifting for a long time. It does mention that at one point one looks at the world through the lens of awareness only, but I don’t think that process is automatic. This is the shift in perspective I am talking about. The subtle body realizes that it is an object in awareness. As we discussed, enlightenment can happen only to the subtle body, not to the self.

**James:** The word “looks” implies that the subtle body is conscious, but it is just an inert reflector of consciousness. Consciousness’ apparent ignorance of its nature resides in the subtle body and is removed there by assimilated self-knowledge. When it is removed, there is a seeming change in perspective.

**Mike:** B. In my opinion, self-enquiry is looking at the world through the lens of awareness so that the experiencing entity realizes its position in the world. The subtle body (the experiencing entity) will always remain but awareness shows “Mike/the subtle body” the rightful place in the scheme of things.

**James:** Seeing as awareness puts the subtle body in perspective. Self-inquiry is, yes, looking at the world as awareness in the form of the teachings of Vedanta insofar as one is always looking through the lens of awareness, because one is the “lens” of awareness. You can’t look “through” what you are. What you are “looks through” the teachings at the objects. This is why Vedanta is called the “third eye.” It is not perceptual. It is just knowledge. One “looks through” the lens of knowledge and the rightful place of objects is revealed.

**Mike:** C. In self-enquiry, even though the subtle body (mind, intellect and ego) is active, looking at the world from the standpoint of awareness allows the subtle body to see through the complex network of thought. As you have repeatedly told in your interviews, the mind cannot die because that would be completely contradictory to common sense. The mind “dies” in a sense, but the only death is the idea of the subtle body being the centre of the universe.

**James:** Yes. This paragraph is a better expression of the previous one. The use of language is essential to teaching. Experiential words can be used to convey knowledge but they need to be properly contextualized in the framework of the teachings of Vedanta.

~ Love, James