

The Friendly Blue Pearl

Ram (James Swartz)

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Ben: Dear James, I began meditating and reading the Vedantic literature at the age of 14 and “experienced” self-realization at age 16. In naming the website Shining World, I doubt you could have chosen a better one. Ever grateful, I remain hopeful that one day we can meet. If we do, I promise not to wear a “V for Vedanta” mask nor to claim to be one of your many long-lost illegitimate spiritual sons come to flirt with and steal his wife.

Enough of that. One question: Where can I find textual mention of the little blue star that followed me and appeared in my mind and in my outer sight in the days leading up to self-realisation? A full reference to the appropriate text would be most appreciated. I don’t recall it from the *Upanishads*.

James: There is no mention of “the blue pearl” in the *Upanishads*, because they are means of self-knowledge and don’t discuss “spiritual” experiences. I believe there are references to it in various *Puranic* texts and the *Yoga darshana*. The best modern reference is Swami Muktananda’s writings – check *Play of Consciousness*. I seem to recall reading of it there. The Blue Pearl experience amounted to a kind of obsession with the Muktananda people back in the day. It was considered a kind of spiritual badge of honor, indicating great attainment in *yoga*. Foolishly, Muktananda encouraged seeking it. It is one of numerous manifestations that sometimes appear in a mind that is inward turned and very *sattvic*.

Ben: Thanks for putting the Blue Pearl into perspective. I first experienced the Blue Pearl in 1969 at the age of 15. I recall there were several others who experienced it at the same time. We had been meditating for perhaps a year when it first appeared at a group meditation not connected with Muktananda. It’s probably a good thing that I didn’t know it was a “badge of honour.” For me, it became a sort of personal friend that encouraged me to keep meditating and enquiring within.

James: That’s the way to take these “spiritual” experiences. They are *Isvara’s* way of telling you that you are on the right path.