

Point of View

Ram (James Swartz)

2013-08-31

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/657>

Ken: James, the statement “Liberation is from Ken, not for Ken” is not accurate. Liberation is for Ken, from *jiva* to *jivanmukta*. Liberation does not apply to pure awareness, because it is always free, i.e. always free of Ken. Pure awareness does not need liberation. Ken, the *jiva*, does. So liberation is for Ken.

Isn't this true? Liberation is the maturation from *jiva* to *jivanmukta*. Who undergoes that maturation? *Jiva-Ken*: from *jiva-Ken* to *jivanmukta-Ken*. But maturation/liberation is not for pure awareness. So liberation is for Ken.

James: I don't think the word “maturation” is very useful, Ken. It is better to think of *jivanmukta* as the knowledge that the *jiva*, which is awareness, is free. So there is no process of becoming free. Either *jiva* realizes that it has always been free or it doesn't. This understanding will come when the *jiva* is mature, and it will result in further maturity, without the *jiva's* efforts.

Ken: I realise now that the second paragraph above depends on my point of view and to whom I am speaking. If I am speaking to someone identified with the *upadhi* then the correct statement would be liberation is from Ken, not for Ken.

If I am speaking to someone whose ignorance has been removed then the second part is correct: liberation is for Ken, from *jiva* to *jivanmukta*... pure awareness does not need liberation. *Jiva-Ken* does. So liberation is for Ken.

So both statements are correct, depending on the point of view of the speaker and the understanding of the listener! Ah, as always, what is the point of view?!?! Then any apparent contradiction can be resolved.

James: Good thinking, Ken! The key to any statement is the point of view from which it is made or evaluated.

Ken: The breakthrough for me was contemplating and understanding your explanation of apparent reality and its relationship to non-dual reality, *mithya* and *satyam*. In all my previous exposure to Vedanta, in Swami Dayananda's and Suddhananda's *ashrams*, this was not properly explained. It was a big gap, missing. Yet it is so critical, a watershed in understanding. Swami D said there was no proper English translation for *mithya*; I did not understand his explanation, probably because my mind was not ready. Swami said it was dependent reality, not as clear and striking as apparent reality, it exists but is not real, an appearance. Their focus was always on *satyam*.

James: An appearance is always dependent on a substrate, so they are right too.

Ken: It is easy to parrot, "I am pure awareness." But what about *mithya*, where the *vasanas* are obstructing my appreciation of who I really am, *satyam*, and causing grief in life? I begin my search in *mithya*, the experienced and known, and progression is always from the known to the unknown. I need to clearly understand the apparent reality, the Ken I take myself to be. Seeing its origin and nature reduces/removes the ignorance. This aspect of Vedanta needs to be clearly and repeatedly hammered out. Then the aspect of pure awareness can be more easily and genuinely grasped.

So thank you once again for your clarity. You are the clearest Vedanta mirror I have faced, and have helped me see my original face (Zen koan: What is your original face?). From my wide experience of other teachers including Neos (read: confusion!!!), there is none clearer. Thank you.

About the understanding of the macrocosm as myself:

James: "The simplest teaching is the fact that any created object is just the knowledge of the object and that knowledge depends on awareness – so creation cannot be anything but awareness."

Ken: Yes, I understand and will continue along that line of approach. I had been analysing objects as objects, then down to atoms – space – nothingness – then awareness of that nothingness – me. It is the same awareness appearing as Ken and appearing as that object. Non-dual reality.

But I get your point: object – knowledge of object in my mind, where I experience it, i.e. thought – no separation between thought and awareness – me. It is the same awareness morphing as me and as the thought of the object, and hence the object.

It is interesting that quantum physics stops at space while Vedanta proceeds to the next step, awareness, which science does not. Being material scientists, they cannot.

It is correct to say an object is there because I see it but it is incorrect to say that because an object is there I see it. Transpose the terms and the meaning is completely different!!

James: The veracity of each statement depends on the point of view. From the *jiva's* perspective seeing is caused by the objects but from the self's point of view the objects are there because they are seen by awareness, meaning they cannot be known unless the awareness illumines them.

Ken: What is the literal/"breakdown" translation for *ajatavada* and *paramartika*?

James: *Ajatavada* means "the path of the unborn." It means that everything is only unchanging awareness therefore there is no path.

Ken: Many blessings and much love and gratitude. Love to Sundari.