

Holy Spirit, Father and The Son

By Jayant Kapatker

Holy Spirit, Father and The Son

Holy Spirit, Father and the Son, you will find this statement at different places in the Bible. It is also called the Holy Trinity. Surprisingly, there is very little explanation for its meaning both in the Bible and in any related commentaries. This has left the followers not knowing what it means. Ray Pritchard in his online article published at Christianity.com sums this up quite well.

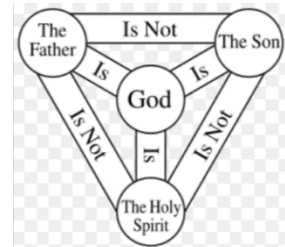
"I admit that no one fully understands it. It is a mystery and a paradox. Yet I believe it is true. I can think of at least three reasons for believing in the Trinity:

1. *The Bible teaches this doctrine.*
2. *Christians everywhere have always believed it.*
3. *No other explanation makes sense.*

Someone has said it this way: If you try to explain the Trinity, you will lose your mind. But if you deny it, you will lose your soul."

The Holy Trinity statement is very cryptic and difficult to understand the intent and what it wants to convey. Based on the various commentaries written, the most common explanation of the Holy Trinity can be summarized as follows:

- God is One
- God is Three Persons. God is Holy Spirit, God is Father and God is Son
- Each of the 3 Persons is different. Holy Spirit is not the Father and the Father is not the son.



Here again, the explanation is quite confusing and difficult to comprehend. God is One, but the same God is 3 Persons and these 3 Persons are different and not the same. It is quite difficult to visualize the scope and powers of God. Why 3 Persons, why not more or less? If God is 3 persons, what is the difference between the 3 persons is. It is also saying there is no difference because God is the 3 Persons. It does seem contradictory.

It does seem difficult to envision God as a Person. A relevant question arises at this point: if it is not a Person, then what kind of 'Threeness' is envisioned? Some of the suggestions you find in the in the commentaries are:

- three titles
- three modes of divine being
- three manifestations

- three roles
- three people
- three gods
- three ways of talking about one God

Even if you choose any one of these options, it does not shed any additional light on the actual meaning of the Holy Trinity. If you analyze the Holy Spirit, Father and the Son, one thing seems clear that the Son must come from a Father. Without a Father, the Son's existence is not possible. The father must be the cause of the Son. If you apply some reasoning, it is not incorrect to assume that the Father could have come after the Holy Spirit. It, therefore, seems that the Holy Spirit is the original and the Father came from the Holy Spirit, and the Son came from Father. If you want to get an idea of this as a part of a diagram, then the Holy Spirit is the first, the Father is the second and the Son is the third.



This sequencing provides some insight into the connection between the 'Threeness', but it does not help in any way to understand what is meant by Holy Spirit, Father, and Son?

Vedanta and Holy Trinity

It does seem we are at a dead end for an explanation about the Holy Trinity. Logically there must be some explanation; otherwise, it would not be in the Bible. It looks like the explanation has been lost over many revisions to the Bible over the centuries. Fortunately, there is hope. It would seem, the teaching of Vedanta can help in decoding the Holy Trinity. If you are a student of Vedanta, you will hear terms like Awareness (or Consciousness), Brahman, Ishvara and the Guru. If you have a proper understanding of Vedanta, then these terms can be substituted in the Holy Trinity as follows:

- Awareness is One
- Awareness is Brahman, Awareness is Ishvara and Awareness is Guru.
- Each Entity is different. Brahman is not Ishvara and Ishvara is not Guru.

According to Vedanta, Awareness is the underlying reality of everything out there and the reality of every living being. The only thing that is present both inside and outside is Awareness. Awareness pervades the entire universe. Awareness is One, and this is the only Truth. We will shortly explain what is meant by Awareness.

How to understand Awareness is Brahman, Awareness is Ishvara and Awareness is Guru? The easiest way is comparing Awareness with the 3 states of water, and as we scroll in the serial order we find water in the solid state, water in liquid state and water in the vapor state. It is a



single content of water, but it can come in any of the 3 states. In the same way, Awareness is one and it can come any one of these states – Brahman, Ishvara, and Guru. We shall be discussing the 3 states of Awareness in the coming sections.

Even if Awareness is the same for Brahman, Ishvara, and Guru, it must be understood that Brhama is not Ishvara and Ishvara is not Guru. They are different from each other. In the coming sections, we will see that the Awareness in Brahman does not do anything, it is non-dual self-shining Awareness. Awareness in Ishvara does everything, it wields the powers of Awareness. Awareness in the Guru is the embodiment of Pure Awareness in a living body.

In Vedanta, Ishvara is God. Both God and Ishvara are synonymous. In the Holy Trinity, God is a name, Holy Spirit is a name Father is a name and Son is a name. There is no description of the Form for God and the Threeness. This is one of the concepts that has led to much confusion. If you give Awareness as the form for the Threeness, the Holy Trinity statement can be re-written as follows:

- Awareness is One
- Awareness is Three Persons. Awareness is Holy Spirit, Awareness is Father and Awareness is Son
- Holy Spirit is not the Father and the Father is not the son.

This makes more sense and, in the process, we can see a connection between Vedanta and the Holy Trinity. If you apply these connections, you can make the following assertions:

- Holy Spirit = Brahman
- Father = Ishvara
- Son = Guru
- **Brahman/Holy Spirit**  **Ishvara/God**  **Guru/Son**

Now that we have established some connections between the Holy Trinity and Vedanta, let us discuss how Awareness is connected to Brahman/Holy Spirit, Ishvara/God, and Guru/Son.

1. Holy Spirit = Brahman - The Non-Dual Self Awareness
2. Father = Ishvara – The Reflected Awareness
3. Son = Guru – The Refracted Awareness

1. Holy Spirit = Brahman - The Non-Dual Self Awareness

The first question to start the discussion is – what is Awareness? What is Self-Awareness? Awareness is the innermost core of any living being. It is like an Awareness bulb shining within our inner core. If any object, it could be an image, sound, touch or feeling, comes in the presence of this bulb of Awareness, you will be aware of that experience. Here are some examples of awareness that we experience daily.

How do we know the tree is green? Because we are aware of it.

How do we know sugar is sweet? Because we are aware of it.

How do we know we have two legs and two hands? Because we are aware of it.

How do we know the weight of the chair is 20 lbs.? Because we are aware of it.

How do we know the smooth touch of silk? Because we are aware of it.

How do we know we are listening to music? Because we are aware of it.

The common thread to all these questions is Awareness. It would seem Awareness is a prerequisite to observe any kind of object. Without awareness, we would not know any objects which are perceived by the 5 senses organs – eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin. These objects from the sensory organs must encounter Awareness, and then only we can observe the object. For an analogy, let us think of the sun. If there is no light emanating from the sun, the entire world will be dark; anything and everything become visible only when there is light. In the same way, when any form encounters the light of Awareness, we become aware of the object. If there is no light of Awareness, you will perceive nothing, not even the sun.

Awareness is the most powerful force in the universe. It has the power to connect with a form present in the mind and fill up the object with Awareness. If you analyze Awareness, you will conclude that Awareness is made up of a Subject, Intelligence, and an Object with the following functions

1. There must be a Subject, who is Aware of the experience. This subject is the ‘knower’ of the Awareness
2. There must be an Object, which must be experienced. This object is the ‘known’ part of the Awareness
3. There must be Intelligence by which the subject gets to know the object. This is the ‘knowing’ part of the Awareness

Knower, Known and Knowing/Intelligence are the 3 powers of Awareness. It must be clear that

- Awareness = Subject + Object + Intelligence
- Power of Awareness = Power of Knower + Power of Knowing + Power of Known

Awareness is made of Subject, Intelligence, and Object and it has three different powers - Knower, Knowing and Known. It must be understood that the Subject, Intelligence, and Object and the three powers are not something outside in the world, but they are within Awareness and they only make up Awareness. If any one of them is missing, awareness will not work and will be incomplete.

- If there is an object to be observed but there is no subject, there will be no awareness, as there is no one to see the object.
- If there is a subject but no object to see, there will no awareness as the subject has no object to observe
- If there is an object but the subject has no way of knowing what this object is, no awareness will take place. This 'knowing' must have intelligence.

Wherever there is awareness, the Subject, Intelligence and Object must be present with all the three powers.

What is Self-Awareness? Our inner core is full, complete and it stands alone. For Awareness to be full and complete, it must be Self-Aware. Self-Awareness means that the 'Awareness is aware of Awareness'. Another way to put this is that 'Self is aware of the Self'. It is like saying 'I am aware of the tree'. Here 'I am' can be referred to as the subject and the tree is the object. In Self-Awareness, the subject is Awareness and the object is Awareness. Awareness plays the role of subject and object. In other words, both the subject and object are the same. There is one entity only which is non-dual. This complete, self-standing Self Awareness is our inner core. There is no separation between the subject and object – it is one and homogenous. It is Self-Shining. This Self-shining Awareness is the Bulb of Awareness and it is our inner core. It is not dependent upon anything else and it generates its own light of Awareness. And it is the Bulb of Awareness.

Self-Awareness is non-dual, homogenous and it has many inherent characteristics.

- It is Formless
- It is Unchanging
- It has Infinite Energy source
- It is Unborn
- It has the 3 powers of Awareness – the power of knower, knowing and known

Brahman is the name given to this inner core of Self-Awareness. This inner core is present in every living being. So, it is present within you, me and within everyone. This Self-Awareness just shines like of bulb of Awareness, and it does not do anything, except radiating Awareness. Nothing affects Self-Awareness, it is always at peace. Peace is its inherent nature. Because Self-Awareness does not anything, all the characteristics mentioned are lying dormant within Self-Awareness.

Since we have equated Brahman = the Holy Spirit, it would be correct to say that the Holy Spirit is another name for the non-dual Self-Awareness.

2. Father = Ishvara - The Reflected Awareness

If our nature and inner core is Self-Awareness, why don't we know it, why don't we feel it? The simple answer is that we are ignorant of our inner core. Ignorance has the power to cover Self-Awareness. When we forget, who we really are, ignorance pops up and covers our inner core. Ignorance is like a veil covering Awareness.

By this time, it has become evident that Self-Awareness does not do anything, it just keeps shining. When this Self-Awareness is covered by ignorance, this Self-Awareness gets reflected in the ignorance. Ignorance is like a mirror in which reflection takes place. What you get then is the Reflected Awareness. When the sun is reflected in a mirror, you still have the sun and you also have a reflected sun. This is exactly what happens here. You have Brahman, the non-dual Self-Awareness and the Reflected Awareness. This Reflected Awareness is called Ishvara.

- It is quite strange to know that our ignorance is the cause of Ishvara, which is Reflected Awareness. If there was no ignorance, there would be no reflected Awareness, and then there would be no Ishvara also. If there was no ignorance, the only thing present would be Brahman, the self-shining Self-Awareness. So, *our* ignorance is the cause of Ishvara.
- Even if there is Reflected Awareness, nothing happens to the non-dual Self Awareness or Brahman. It will continue to shine, irrespective if there is ignorance or there is no ignorance. This is like the sun which will shine even if it is cloudy, or it is the night. Nothing can stop the sun from shining. Similarly, Self-Awareness will continue to shine if there is ignorance or ignorance.
- It must be understood that in the presence of ignorance, there is no effect on Reflected Awareness. Reflected Awareness remains pure and unaffected. This does seem counterintuitive. It would be reasonable to assume that ignorance will rub off some of its ignorance on the reflected Awareness or Ishvara. Then again, we know Ishvara is

pure, limitless and just cannot have any ignorance. How to understand this? The classic example given is if you pour water in a red bottle. The water will appear to be red. It seems the redness of the bottle has affected the water. Our ignorance can lead to this conclusion. If you have proper knowledge you will know that the water in the bottle is always colorless and the red color of the bottle has no effect on the water. It is with this logic, we can understand that Ignorance has no effect on the Reflected Awareness. Reflected Awareness or Ishvara is pure and limitless.

- Ignorance has two sides, an input and output side. The Reflected Awareness appears on the input side of ignorance. We will discuss the output side of ignorance in the next section.

We have seen that Self-Awareness is nondual, in which 'Self' is both the subject and object. Unfortunately, because of our ignorance, we have forgotten that our inner core is nondual, and we are both the subject and the object. Since we no longer know that we are both the subject and the object, it simply means that there is a separation of the subject being 'in here' and the object being 'out there'. Ignorance converts the non-duality into the duality of the subject in here and the object out there. Ignorance has that power.

In the non-dual Self Awareness, the power behind the subject is the Power of the Knower and the power behind of object is the Power of the Known. In non-duality, the subject and object are the same. Therefore, logically the power of the knower is the same as the power of known. They are homogenous with no separation. This is what happens in non-dual Self Awareness or Brahman. We have just seen that because of ignorance, the subject and object separate creating duality. With this separation, even the power of the knower and the power of known get separated. They are no longer one entity, but the power of the knower and the power of the known appear as two separate entities in Reflected Awareness. Even the 3rd power of Knowing is available in the Reflected Awareness. Each of these 3 powers of Awareness is very much active in Ishvara.

Vedanta teaches us that *Maya Shakti* is the power or force behind creation and intelligence of the universe. As has already become evident in the last few parts of the discussion, that power of known, the power of knowing and the power of knower are now available in the Reflected Awareness. These 3 powers are nothing, but the *Maya Shakti* as mentioned in Vedanta.

Maya Shakti = Power of Knower + Power of Knowing + Power of Known

This *Maya Shakti* is within the Reflected Awareness and Ishvara wields this *Maya Shakti* to operate and control this universe.

Ishvara = Reflected Awareness + *Maya Shakti*.

Let us discuss each of the 3 powers of Ishvara to understand their nature and function.

1. Power of Knowing or Intelligence

The knowing or intelligence component of Awareness is extremely powerful, in fact language and words may not be enough to describe its awesome power. Here are some examples that indicate its strength and power.

Example 1: I am seeing a tree. A more Vedantic way to put it will be 'I am the seer seeing a tree'

This is a simple experience we have every moment, but it shows the extraordinary power of Awareness. Let us breakup this experience into the different components of Awareness

Ego = I am

Subject = Seer

Object = Tree

Intelligence = Seeing is the power of Awareness, which makes it possible for 'I' to know the tree. Without the power of Seeing, none of us will see any object. Someone may argue that the eye provides this power. The eye does nothing other than converting the image into an optical signal, and bringing the signal to the mind. What is the ability that decodes this optical signal into the understanding that this object is a tree? It is power of the Seeing which is within Awareness which allows us to know that there is a tree. This intelligence in Awareness knows that the optical signal is a tree.

Awareness = Seer + Seeing + Seen

Example 2: You are reading a book or 'You are the reader reading a book'

This power of intelligence is within Awareness and is available to everyone. Let us decode the experience of reading.

Ego = You

Subject = Reader

Object = Book

Intelligence = Reading is a power within Awareness which allows the Subject or Reader to connect with the contents of the book. It is within Awareness because you are aware that you are reading - first, to know the words and sentences, and then to know what is being read. We are so used to reading that we do not think of this ability as anything special. If there was no

power of reading within Awareness, there would be no way you could read anything. With this power of “reading” we are aware that we are reading, and this awareness completes the reading experience.

Awareness = Reader + Reading + Read

Example 3: You are visiting a friend or ‘You are the visitor visiting a friend’

Subject = Visitor

Object = Friend

Intelligence = you are aware that you are visiting a friend. This power of knowing that you are visiting is part of the Intelligence within Awareness, and it is also about knowing that this person is a friend. If you did not have this power within you, you will never know this person is your friend, and you have specifically made an effort to visit him.

Awareness = Visitor + Visiting + Visited

We can continue to give any number of examples to highlight the power of Awareness. We can take any verb in the English language and add the ‘ing’ to this verb. This word when connected with a Subject and Object will have the power of creating a awareful experience within the mind. Some more examples:

Awareness = Eater + Eating + Eaten

Awareness = Sleeper + Sleeping + Slept

Awareness = Fighter + Fighting + Fought (an Object)

Awareness = Player + Playing + Played (an Object)

Awareness = Learner + Learning + Learned

The intelligence within Awareness has an unlimited range of power, it is impossible to comprehend. We can comprehend only what experiences our mind can handle.

Awareness is not limited by the capacity of our mind. It is much more, and this Awareness has an infinite amount of intelligence, it has the infinite amount of knowledge about everything that is possible. What is amazing, this unlimited intelligence, this pure intelligence, this Awareness is available within everyone’s mind.

2. Power of the Knower or the Subject

In the earlier section, we saw the power of knowing, the intelligence of knowing. There must be a Knower to see an object and perceive what it looks like. This is done by the Subject within

Awareness. The Subject is the Knower of the experience. This Subject is not only the Knower of seeing, but is also the knower of hearing, the knower of reading, knower of sleeping, etc.

- When it is the knower of seeing, the Subject is a Seer
- When it is the knower of hearing, the Subject is a Hearer
- When it is the knower of reading, the Subject is a Reader
- When it is the knower of running, the Subject is a Runner

There is only one Subject, and it is the Knower of so many things. In fact, it is the Knower of everything. All this fall within the category of Awareness.

Our minds are limited and therefore the power and range of the Knower is limited. Awareness is beyond the mind and this Subject within Awareness is Knower of everything that is possible. There is nothing that Awareness does not know.

Conclusion: Where ever there is Awareness, there must be a Subject. This Subject is the Knower and this Knower has the power of knowing everything that is possible. We should never confuse this Subject with Ego. This Subject is part of Awareness and this Subject does NOT have an ego. If I say, 'I am the Knower' or 'I am the Subject', the 'I am' is the Ego. The Knower and the Subject is not part of the Ego, but it is part of Awareness. In Awareness there is no attachment and no ego, it is simply aware.

3.Power of Known or Objects

The Object component of Awareness is also extremely powerful, and it can take any form that we experience in the mind.

If you see a round circle, then awareness cannot take shape of a square. If it does not, you will never experience the round circle. Awareness must also be a round circle with the same exact dimensions. If you see a tree, then awareness must also take the shape of the tree. This tree must be filled up with the Awareness. If the tree is half-filled with awareness or the awareness does not have the same shape as the tree, you will not be aware of the tree.

If you want to observe any object with form,

1. The form must be filled in with Awareness and nothing but Awareness. If the form does not have Awareness, then the observer or subject will not be able to experience the object with that form.
2. The Awareness must take the exact shape of the form.

Awareness by itself is formless, but it has the potential to take any form. If you look into a powerful microscope, awareness can take the shape of a molecule or if you look at the universe through a telescope, awareness can take shape of the stars and galaxies. Big or small, awareness can take the shape of anything. Awareness has the potential to take any form.

Awareness is this powerful force in our mind, which can take up any shape or form. Another way to put it: all possible 'potential forms' are available within Awareness. They are inherently present in Awareness, and they take a required form when you experience that form in your mind. How many different 'potential forms' are present in Awareness? Countless, infinite!!

Ishvara or the Reflected Awareness has the power of knower, the power of knowing and the power of known. It wields these powers to operate and controls the universe out there. As we have seen earlier that *Ishvara* = Father, so the Father in the Holy Trinity is the Reflected Awareness and it wields all the 3 power of Awareness.

3. Son = Guru - The Refracted Awareness

In the earlier section we saw the *Ishvara* as the Reflected Awareness is on the input side of ignorance. In this section, we will discuss the output side of ignorance. This is the side the Guru/Son function. Before we do that, let us decode ignorance and get a better understanding of ignorance.

Pixel of Ignorance:

It is important to understand the process of Knowledge and the lack of knowledge (ignorance) which, to some, might appear to have a complicated profile. It will show that there are different degrees of ignorance. This ignorance plays a central role in our existence.

Let us start by taking an example about the knowledge of Chinese language. If someone has complete knowledge about the Chinese language, he knows everything that is possible; this person will have 100% knowledge about the Chinese language. On the other end of the scale there are people who are completely ignorant about the language; they are 100% ignorant about this language. Every living being in the universe will fall in between this scale of 100% knowledge to 100% ignorance. So, there is a knowledge/ignorance profile about the Chinese language. Take another subject, say Mathematics. Here again there will be a scale of 100% knowledge to 100% ignorance. People will fall somewhere in the scale of 100% knowledge to 100% ignorance. So, there is a knowledge/ignorance profile for mathematics. In the same way, there must be a knowledge/ignorance profile for every possible topic or object in the universe. If we combine this scale of 100% knowledge to 100% ignorance for every topic, we will get a

cumulative knowledge/ignorance profile for all the possible topics and objects. Within this cumulative knowledge/ignorance scale, each person will know his/her own knowledge or ignorance profile. Each living being has more knowledge on some topics and less or no knowledge on other topics. This will be shown in the knowledge/ignorance profile for every individual living being. In other words, every being will have their own unique knowledge/ignorance profile.

To the knowledge/ignorance profile of objects, you must also add the knowledge profile of the Self. Here again, the spectrum can be broken down into countless parts and each part has a different amount of Ignorance. An enlightened person will have 100% knowledge of the Self, while a completely ignorant person will have 0% knowledge or 100% ignorance.

In this cumulative and complicated knowledge/ignorance profile, if you can imagine there are a countless number of 'pixels of ignorance'. Each 'pixel of ignorance' has its own unique mix of ignorance and knowledge. Each 'pixel of ignorance' represents a single individual living being with its own ignorance/knowledge profile. There is countless number of living beings and each living being has its own 'pixel of ignorance'. You have a pixel of ignorance and I have a pixel of ignorance, and in the same way every living being has its own unique pixel of ignorance.

We have seen on the input side of ignorance, the Reflected Awareness is present with duality, with separate subject, object and the intelligence. This reflected Awareness or the Ishvara, makes the pixel conscious and sentient. When this pixel of ignorance interacts with the reflected Awareness, it breaks up the Self-Awareness into the following 4 parts. We know Self Awareness is made up of the following 4 parts:

Self-Awareness = Self + Subject + Intelligence + Objects

It is like refraction. Place a prism in front of light and we can see the 7 different colors on the other side. In the same ways, the ignorance of the Self within the pixel refracts the reflected Awareness into the following 4 different components.

- *Manas* – The home of the objects
- *Buddhi* – The home of the intelligence
- *Sakshi* – The home of the subject
- *Ahamkara* (ego) – The home of the self

These 4 components make up the mind. The creation of the mind is the output side of the pixel of ignorance. The mind is the part of the subtle body. So, the ignorance of the Self has that power to create the mind.

Mind = Refracted Awareness + Ignorance

There are a countless number of pixels of ignorance – one for each individual living being. This refraction takes place in each pixel and thereby countless number of minds is created. Each mind thus created, will be different; it will depend upon the knowledge/ignorance profile for each pixel. The simple calculation is this: more the ignorance, less efficient the mind. It will have a lower intelligence level. The opposite is also true, lower is the level of ignorance, the mind finds the right passage to evolve fast. A pure mind will have no ignorance.

Mind and Awareness

In the mind because of ignorance these 4 components are sitting in different departments. The power of Intelligence is sitting in the *Buddhi*, the power of objects is sitting in the *Manas*, the power of subject is sitting in the *Sakshi* and the Self or 'I-ness' is sitting in the *Ahamkara*. These four parts are separated, but there is a natural tendency for these 4 parts to combine to create Self-Awareness. so that they can achieve its original status of being Self-Awareness. When the subject, object and intelligence are separated out, the self feels incomplete, it feels inadequate and it wants to feel full and complete. The only way the self can feel a sense of completeness is when the subject, object and intelligence combine into one entity to create Awareness. Let us see how this happens.

We have discussed this process in quite some detail in Understanding the Mind – part 2. We give a quick summary over here:

1. The subtle object wave forms from external the world is picked by the subtle (not gross) sense organs (eye, ear, nose, touch and taste) and sent to the *Manas* (the home with the power of the known). These object waveforms are covered in ignorance – hence they are unknown.
2. This waveform covered by ignorance is sent to the *Buddhi* (the home of intelligence). The *buddhi* is intelligent and it unmask the ignorance and reveals the waveform of the objects. Since the ignorance has been removed, the waveforms are now made up of intelligence and they know what object they represent. Vedanta calls these intelligent wave forms as '*Vrittis*'.
3. These *vrittis* from the *buddhi* is now presented to the *Sakshi* (home of the power of the subject). Magic happens when the waveform is presented to the *Sakshi*. We have seen that when subject, object and intelligence combine, you get Awareness. When the object in the *Manas*, combines with the *Buddhi* and comes in the presence of the *Sakshi*, you get Awareness. This is the Refracted Awareness which is now available in the mind.
4. When this Refracted Awareness combines with the intelligent waveform, you have the Experience of the universe 'out there'.

The experience happens in the mind only. It cannot happen anywhere else. Also, any experience we have is made up of Refracted Awareness and the Form. The Refracted Awareness comes about by combining the subject, object and intelligence and the form comes from all the 5 senses.

Experience = Refracted Awareness + Form

This Refracted Awareness is present in the mind and each living being has a mind. The Guru also has experiences and has the Refracted Awareness. So, what is the difference between you, me and a Guru? The Guru is also a human being. Let us discuss this in more details

The True Guru

These days the term Guru is overused, and it can mean a teacher or expert. In Vedanta, the term is much more specific, it means a self-realized spiritual person. In Vedanta, the Guru is no different from Ishvara or Brahman. Guru is the Brahman or Ishvara in human form. Let us discuss some of the key qualities of a Guru, so that we can show how the Guru functions in this universe

Guru has a Sattvic Mind: In Sanskrit Sattvic means pure. This means that the Guru has a pure mind with no Ignorance. We have seen that

Mind = Refracted Awareness = Ignorance

The Sattvic mind has no ignorance. What does this mean? It means that the Guru knows that his inner core is Self-Awareness. He knows that it is his inherent nature. He knows he is full and complete and therefore he has no desire. He is at peace with everything good and bad. This state is permanent; it is not a fluctuating state. His mind is always immersed in Awareness. In fact, it is correct to say that the Guru has no mind, he has only Self-Awareness. We have seen that Reflected Awareness is the source of the mind. The Guru abides in the source and has no need for the mind.

Guru does not Experience Duality: Almost every living being experiences duality – the subject 'in here' and the object 'out there'. This is our daily experience. We have seen ignorance of our non-dual nature of Self Awareness, leading to duality with the separation of the subject and the object. Since the Guru does not experience duality, does that mean that the Guru does not perceive the universe 'out there'? That is incorrect; he perceives the world out there, but experiences non-duality. This is quite a confusing statement. To understand this, let us discuss the statement we have mentioned earlier:

- Experience = Refracted Awareness + Form

What is the difference between Awareness and Form?

Pot/Clay Metaphor: Vedanta uses the example of pot/clay to explain this concept. If you have clay, this clay has the potential to take the shape of any type of pot - small, large, round or square. Once these pots of different shapes and sizes are ready, the question can be asked, how can we differentiate between which part is the pot and what constitutes the clay? The answer to this question is as follows

Pot = Form

Clay = Content

The content is only clay; the pot form is superimposed on the clay. There can be no misunderstanding and confusion about this. In the same way, everything we experience in our mind is only made up of Awareness, and different Forms are superimposed upon this Awareness. It is that simple. When we see the different forms out there, it should be clear that content of everything in the universe is Awareness, and that the form is superimposed on this Awareness. Just like the clay and the pot.

Everything in this universe has two sides: one is the content side which is made of Awareness and the second is the form side which is made of the inputs from the 5 senses. Almost all human being operates on the form side of the object. This Form side is only made of ignorance, and this ignorance covers the Refracted Awareness. This covering by the Form, hides the Refracted Awareness and therefore we think that the Form side is real. How can you say that the Form side is made up of Ignorance? Compare the following statements

- Mind = Refracted Awareness + Ignorance
- Experience = Refracted Awareness + Form
- Mind = Experience
- Refracted Awareness + Ignorance = Refracted Awareness + Form
- Ignorance = Forms

This clearly shows that the Forms of all the objects (visual, auditory, smell, taste and touch) are made up of ignorance. There is fully functioning universe made up of ignorance and most of the human being live and operate in this universe made up of ignorance. We live in ignorance; we operate in ignorance and in all probability, we also die in ignorance.

The Guru is not ignorant; the Guru operates on the side of Refracted Awareness. He knows that his true nature is Self-Awareness. He has no confusion regarding this. Since the content of all the objects is Awareness, the Guru who is Self-Aware of sees his true nature of Awareness in all the objects of the universe. He sees no difference between his own Self and all the objects out

there. He therefore sees nonduality everywhere in the universe. He sees all the form of the objects, but he sees them as Awareness, as his own Self.

I agree it is impossible for us to visualize how the Guru sees the universe out there, we can only imagine. Only the Guru knows this and no one else.

Pathways to become a Guru:

There are two ways to become a Guru

Self-Realized Guru: This person is born as a normal human being, but during his lifetime he becomes a Self-Realized Guru. He is born with an ego and his desires resemble that of any normal person. His ego tries to find permanent happiness with the external objects in the world. By understanding his true nature is Self-Awareness, he realizes that his true nature is full and complete, and he is the Awareness which is the source of everything. He then directs his ego inwards to the non-dual Self-Aware Brahman. With proper and continuous effort, it, therefore, becomes possible for a human being to reach the status of Self-Realized Guru. The ego of this person is immersed, or it blends with the inner core of Self Awareness.

Born as a Guru: Lord Krishna and Jesus are two examples of those that are born as Gurus. Jesus is called the Son of God. Lord Krishna in Chapter 4 verse 6 of the Bhagavad Gita says that he is the Ishvara and has taken birth as a human being. God is the omnipotent and the omniscient driving force of the universe, so it is entirely possible for God to acquire the human form.

Even though the Holy Trinity talks about the Son of God, it must be understood, that the Self-Realized Guru also has the same status, the Self-Realized Guru is also God.

From this discussion, we can conclude that the Guru = Son are Ishvara in a human body. They are Self Aware, and there is no difference between them and the Brahman = Holy Spirit or Ishvara = Father.

Conclusion

So, we have seen that with the help of the teaching of Vedanta, we can decode the teaching of the Holy Trinity. Awareness is the underlying reality of the universe, and the same Awareness is the nondual Brahman/Holy Spirit, the Ishvara/Father wielding all the powers of Awareness and the Guru/Son in a human body.