

Sloka 54 (Chapter 2)

Arjuna uvacha,

**STHITAPRAJNASYA KAA BHASHA SAMAADHISTASYA KESHAVA
STHIDADEEHI KIM PRABHASHETA KIM ASEETA VRAJETA KIM**

Arjuna said,

O Krishna, what are the characteristics of a man of steady wisdom while he is merged in the “super-conscious state”? How does such a man speak, sit and move?

He, who is merged in the ”Super-conscious state” is said to be in “samadhi.” Samadhi is the last limb of the “Patanjali Ashtanga Yoga”, the eight limbed yoga of Patanjali. (see below)

Samadhi is also the word used to denote “the grave” or “the tomb”. When the Soul departs from the body, there are no more activities left in the body. The jnanendriyas and the mind do not function.

In this sloka, the word is used to denote the state of that individual who is a man of steady-wisdom. His jnanendriyas and the mind are alive but technically speaking they are “dead.” The individual is still alive.

The spiritual seeker who, by constant practice has subdued his senses lives like a man in the grave as far as his reactions to the outer world are concerned. The state of “deep meditation” he is in is “samadhi.” Such a seeker who has reached this state is a “Jivan mukta.” He is a liberated soul while still alive.

Arjuna asks Krishna for the means of identification of such an individual. He was aware of great souls of his time who had gone to remote corners like the Himalaya and entered into a state of samadhi. He was not sure of any who were living and moving about the world after reaching the pinnacle of sadhana.

He wanted to know such an individual’s daily activities and how to recognise him?

Wearing of an ochre robe is not the sign of such jivanmukta.

Truly speaking a man’s character is recognisable by the way he speaks and moves about in the society. He is a learned person and knows the sastras. One finds peace, purity and divinity in a jivan mukta.

We, the rest of us, have not reached such state of perfection. While there are no problems in life, one can express calmness in his actions and speech. As soon as he experiences problems in life or when he has achieved success in his task, he tends to lose the purity and calmness.

We are attached to the material world around us.

For the sake of information:

The ashtanga yoga is:

Yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and samadhi.

We will discuss these in chapter 4.

Mahatma Gandhi is a strong advocate of the qualities of a “sthitha Prajna.” He used to recite the subsequent slokas 54-72 from this chapter every day. He not only recited them but understood them and practised them.