

Sloka 69 (Chapter 2)

**YAA NISHA SARVA BHOOTANAAM TASYAAM JAGRATI SAMYAMEE
YASYAAM JAGRATI BHOOTANI SAA NISHAA PASHYATO MUNEHE**

That which is night to all, in it the sage is awake. Where all beings are awake, that is the night for the sage who sees the Self.

“Jagat Mithya and Paramatma Satya” is the message from the learned seers to their disciples. It simply means that the only reality is “The Parabrahman who pervades all.” The rest is only an illusion. The world as such does not exist from the point of view of “Advaitin” (non dual philosopher.) This is the vision of the realised soul.

Whereas majority of us perceive the world as real and are immersed in worldly activities. We are attached to objects of the world and are caught in the net of “Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada and Matsarya.”

In this second group, there are few that are aware of the Parabrahman but are unable to grasp its significance.

There is another group of men that are oblivious to the idea of the God and live the life pursuing the pleasures. We can say that they are “egocentric”.

From the point of view of the Advaitin, “Maya” or “Illusion” is ignorance. Ignorance is compared to darkness and knowledge to brightness. On this basis of understanding, the “sage” referred to in this sloka is a man of true knowledge and knows the difference between the real and false. (Nitya and Anitya - Eternal and Impermanent) He is said to be “Awake” as he is living in “light of spiritual knowledge.” To the rest who live in world of attachments it is the night as far as the knowledge of the Atman is concerned.

This is the meaning of the first half of the verse.

"Where all beings are awake that is the night for the sage who sees the Self": This refers to the physical day light as compared to the spiritual day light for the sage.

Technically speaking majority of us are awake during day time. It is the time we are involved in various activities that bind us to the world around us. During the physical daytime, the sage is spiritually living in night because he is not attached to the world around him. He is totally immersed in the “Atman” and does not see the world around him. (living in night.)

There are some sages who spend their nights in meditation and sleep for few hours in the daytime. The second half of the sloka refers to these also.

There are some other realised souls, who have mastered the art of withdrawal from the physical world and are still awake during the daytime. They are said to be in the world but not truly living in the world. They are physically awake in daytime but spiritually sleeping in relation to the physical world.

Physically awake - spiritually ignorant: majority of us. Conditioned by the time of the day and immersed in worldly activities. Unaware of the Atman within and all around.

Physically sleeping but spiritually awake to the Atman within and all around: this is the way of living of the realised soul.

This does not mean that the yogi should remain awake at night and sleep during the day. He must learn the art of meditation with self-discipline and can still be part of the world and work for its welfare. This is the true picture of a “sthitaprajna.”