

Reflections from Shrimad Bhagavadgita– Part 141: Chapter 15, Verses 11-14

(January 13 – January 19, 2021)

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ORIGINAL SANSKRIT DOCUMENT

TRANSLITERATION

यतन्तो योगिनश्चैनं पश्यन्त्यात्मन्यवस्थितम् ।

*yatanto yoginaśh chainaṁ paśhyanty ātmany
avasthitam*

यतन्तोऽप्यकृतात्मानो नैनं पश्यन्त्यचेतसः ॥ १५-११ ॥

*yatanto 'py akṛitātmāno nainaṁ paśhyanty
achetasah*

यदादित्यगतं तेजो जगद्भासयतेऽखिलम् ।

yad āditya-gataṁ tejo jagad bhāsayate 'khilam

यच्चन्द्रमसि यच्चाग्नौ तत्तेजो विद्धि मामकम् ॥ १५-१२ ॥

*yach chandramasi yach chāgnau tat tejo viddhi
māmakam*

गामाविश्य च भूतानि धारयाम्यहमोजसा ।

gām āviśhya cha bhūtāni dhārayāmy aham ojasā

पुष्णामि चौषधीः सर्वाः सोमो भूत्वा रसात्मकः ॥ १५-१३ ॥

*puṣhṇāmi chauṣhadhīḥ sarvāḥ somo bhūtvā
rasātmakaḥ*

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः ।

*aham vaiśhvānaro bhūtvā prāṇinām deham
āśhritaḥ*

प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् ॥ १५-१४ ॥

*prāṇāpāna-samāyuktaḥ pachāmy annaṁ chatur-
vidham*

TRANSLATION

- (11)** Striving yogis too are able to realize the soul enshrined in the body. However, those whose minds are not purified cannot perceive it, even though they strive to do so.
- (12)** Understand that the effulgence of the sun that illuminates the entire solar system, as well as the radiance of the moon and the brightness of the fire all come from Me.
- (13)** Permeating the earth, I nourish all living beings with My energy. Having Become the essence of the moon, I nourish all plant life.
- (14)** I take the form of the fire of digestion in the stomachs of all living beings, and combined with the incoming and outgoing breaths, I digest and assimilate the four kinds of foods.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1A8UljCHg0afx3dyV2MJO7VW4lyhLXtwu/view?usp=sharing>

Chapter 15

Verse 11:

It is extremely difficult to perceive the *atma* or immortal soul within one's etheric heart even if endeavoring with acute discrimination and focused attention. Only some are able to succeed while others who strive do not. **The pure yogis who have mastered the science of meditation and completed control of the senses, who assiduously strive for self-realization, after great effort perceive the *atma* residing within their own physical body and distinctly different from it.** Whereas those who have not mastered the science of meditation, who have not managed to control the mind, who are of impure thoughts, who are unable to curb the impetuous impulses of the senses, and hence are deluded, bewildered and spiritually deficient will be unable to perceive the *atma* no matter how hard they strive by study and practice.

Verse 12:

Previously Lord Krishna has delineated the dual nature of the *jiva* or embodied being as either liberated or in bondage and the means to free oneself from the captivity of *samsara* or the perpetual cycle of birth and death. Also anticipating any doubt of the transmigration of the *atma* or immortal soul, Lord Krishna has categorically and unequivocally identified it as eternal and distinctly different from the perishable physical body. **Now in this verse, the**

omnipotent nature of the Supreme Lord Krishna is revealed beginning with the various kinds of natural light that exist in material existence. The factual understanding is that it is by the light of consciousness from the Supreme Lord that the sun, the moon, lightning and fire receive their luminosity and effulgence as they are solely illuminated by the Supreme Lord and thus a part of His potency.

Verse 13:

The word *gaam* means earth and the word *ojasa* means indomitable potency. Lord Krishna enters into every atom of the Earth by this potency and supports all mobile and stationary *jivas* or embodied beings by this potency. Like all other celestial bodies, the earth is also a big mass of matter. But God has made it habitable, so that, it can sustain life. Ever wondered, why ocean water is so salty? God could have made the oceans full of freshwater, but it would have become a breeding ground for diseases. Due to the high salt content of the ocean water, many disease-causing microorganisms cannot survive in it, thereby protecting aquatic animal and plant life. Similarly, several such amazing phenomena make earth inhabitable to a variety of terrestrial species, of both movable, and static living beings, including but not limited to humans. He also manifests the energy of the moon, which nourishes all plants, vegetables, fruits and herbs, yielding crops such as rice and grains.

Verse 14:

Lord Krishna declares that He is *vaishvanara*, the digestive fire, which joins together with the vital breaths of *prana* or exhalation and *apana* or inhalation. Together they digest in the stomach the four kinds of food which are foods that are *khadva* or chewed, *soshva* or sucked, *lehya* or licked and *peya* or drank. The first is that which is chewed by masticating the food into small pieces so it can be swallowed such as bread and vegetables. Next is that which can be licked by the tongue and swallowed without chewing like honey or molasses. After is that which can be sucked like the juice within sugarcane, and finally is that which can be swallowed without chewing such as soups and liquid beverages. In these last three verses Lord Krishna specifies integral functions of the *jivas* or embodied beings and of the Earth that are manifestations of His opulent glories.