

declares, that it is He, Who through the medium of the moon, nourishes all plants.

The moon, in the bright half of the lunar month nourishes vegetation, while in the dark half it withers it. In the bright half, the sweet rays of the moon, nourish all herbs and plants, by infusing sap into them. A child in the womb of its mother, also grows in the bright half of a lunar month.

Here the term 'Somaḥ', stands for the 'Candraloka' (the lunar world), rather than only the moon. The moon, has not only the illuminating power, but also the power to create nectar. Nectar first comes to the moon from the lunar world, and then it comes to the earth, from the moon.

Here the term 'Auśadhīḥ' stands for different kinds of corn, such as wheat and gram etc. The moon nourishes all herbs, plants and vegetables. All beings, such as men, birds and beasts etc., are nourished by the corn, nourished by the moon. That nourishing power of the moon, is in fact of God, rather than its own. The moon is merely an instrument on His hands.

**Appendix**—The earth and the moon etc.,—all is the Lord's lower nature (Gītā 7/4). Therefore only God is its supporter, producer, sustainer, protector and illuminator etc.,—all. Aparā Prakṛti (lower nature) being the power of God, is inseparable with Him.

Here the term 'Soma' stands for 'Candraloka' (the lunar world) which is above the Sun.\*



*Link:—Having explained how He is the source of energy of the cosmic life, in the preceding verse, in the next verse, He explains how He digests food, through the gastric fire.*

\* na viduḥ soma te māyām ye ca nakṣatrayonayaḥ  
tvamādityapathādūrdhvaṁ jyotiṣāṁ coparisthitāḥ

(Padmapurāṇa, Sṛṣṭi. 41/128)

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः ।

प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् ॥ १४ ॥

aham vaiśvānaro bhūtvā prāṇināṃ dehamāśritaḥ  
prāṇāpānasamāyuktaḥ pacāmyannam caturvidham

As the fire of life, in the bodies of living creatures and united with the Prāṇa and Apāna breaths, I digest, the four kinds of food. 14

*Comment:—*

'Aham vaiśvānaro bhūtvā prāṇināṃ dehamāśritaḥ'— Having described the light in the fire as His light, in the twelfth verse, here in this verse He describes, the gastric fire, that digests the four kinds of food.\* It means, that it is by God's power, that the fire illumines objects and also digests food. This fire, digests food of immovable creation such as plants, trees and creepers, of movable beings such as birds and beasts etc., as it digests, the food of human beings and enables them to grow. It means, that God in the form of gastric fire, nourishes the bodies of beings.

'Prāṇāpānasamāyuktaḥ'—In the body, there are five primary vital airs, known as 'Prāṇa', 'Apāna', 'Samāna', 'Udāna' and 'Vyāna' and there are five secondary vital airs known as 'Nāga', 'Kūrma', 'Kṛkara', 'Devadatta' and 'Dhanañjaya'.† In the verse, the Lord

\* The fire that abides in the stomach is called Vaiśvānara and it digests the food which is eaten.

† The functions of these ten vital airs are as follows:—

(1) Prāṇa:—It resides in the heart. It exhales air, digests the food and so on.

(2) Apāna:—It resides in anus. It inhales air, excretes waste matter and throw out the foetus from the womb.

(3) Samāna:—It resides in the navel. It circulates the essence of the digested food in all the limbs.

(4) Udāna:—It abides in the throat. It separates the solid and the liquid portions of food. It separates the subtle body from the physical body and transmigrates it to another body or to the world.

describes, only two main kinds of vital air— Prāṇa and Apāna which fan the fire, that abides in the stomach and also circulate the essence of the digested food, to every part of the body.

'Pacāmyannam caturvidham'—Beings, eat four kinds of food—

(1) Bhojya:—That which is eaten, having been chewed with teeth, such as bread and sweet cake etc.

(2) Peya:—That which is swallowed, as milk and juice etc.

(3) Coṣya:—That which is sucked, such as sugarcane and mango etc. The immovable beings, such as tree etc., receive food, in this way.

(4) Lehya:—That which has to be licked such, as sauce and honey etc.

These four kinds, can further be divided into many other sub-kinds. The Lord, declares that it is He, Who digests the four kinds of food, by becoming gastric fire. No food, can be digested without His power.

**Appendix**—Entering the earth to support all beings, becoming the moon to nourish all vegetation, and becoming the gastric fire to digest the food in the living creatures—all these activities are carried out by God's power. But a man by regarding them to be done by himself, feels proud for nothing—'aham karomīti vṛthābhimānaḥ'; as a dog, which moves under the bullock-cart in its shade, thinks that it itself alone drives the bullock-cart.



(5) Vyāna:—It abides in whole of the body. It shrinks and expands the body and its parts.

(6) Nāga:—It's function is belching.

(7) Kūrma:— It's function is shutting and opening the eyes.

(8) Kṛkara:—It's function is sneezing.

(9) Devadatta:—It's function is yawning.

(10) Dhanañjaya:—It abides in the body even after death and puffs out the dead body. In fact, only one vital air is differentiated according to its various functions.