

9. THE PHILOSOPHY OF GAUTAMA

He may have mastered the Vedas and scriptures,
He may compose verses with utmost ease,
But bereft of purity of mind, he comes to ruin.
Mind is the cause for all these, O Man!

Embodiments of Divine Atma,

The Shaddharshanas (the six systems of philosophy) are India's rational and convincing answer to those people who dismiss Indian philosophy as a corpus of blind beliefs. The six systems of philosophy are the profound expositions of the manifold meanings of the Vedic texts. The Shaddharshanas laid bare to the world the deep scientific thought and wisdom contained in the Vedas. Firmly planting themselves on the three principles of theism, inner vision and the Vedas, the sages handed over to mankind a profound system of philosophy that never changes in all the three times of past, present and future. Plumbing the very depths of humanity, Shaddharshanas dispelled the doubt and the fear, the sorrow and the anxiety, deep seated in the human heart. Keeping the welfare of humanity uppermost in its mind, the Shaddharshanas gifted to the world a philosophy of hope, well-being and serenity, showing to mankind the art of self-purification.

The six systems expounded the unity of the Vedas (sacred text), Vedantha (Vedic philosophy) and Vedagna (the knower of Vedas) and professed the unity in diversity in the Divine creation of God. The Shaddharshanas traced the variety and diversity, that exist in the world, to the mind and showed how mind is the seat of the noble and the ignoble, the lofty and the low. They fathomed the depths of human mind and expounded the principles of oneness, the right royal road for humanity to tread upon.

NYAYA PHILOSOPHY:

The author of Nyaya philosophy is sage Gautama, and the principles expounded by him are known as 'Gautama Sutras.' The great sages of India envisioned great truths, by transcending the domain of the mind. They made gigantic leaps from one mind to another, the supermind, the higher mind, the illuminated mind and the overmind and ultimately found themselves face to face with 'Reality.' The so-called scientists of today, rooted in their ordinary mind, fail to understand the sublime Divine truths envisioned by the Indian sages. As though, that were not enough, the scientists of today pride themselves, boasting that they have discovered facts and things which the sages had failed to discover.

ANCIENT SAGES VERSUS MODERN SCIENTISTS:

The discoveries made by the modern scientists are in the realms of matter (Padartha) whereas the sages of ancient India explored the region of the Spirit (parartha). The scientists are feeding greedily on what was dismissed as trash by our great sages of the past. The narrow-minded scientists do not bring themselves to believe in the great discoveries made by our ancestors. Whether they believe or not, the truths discovered by the wise ancestors stand as eternal verities. It is not science which is anti-God; it is the scientists who are anti-God.

Students should probe into the matter and find out what is Truth and what is falsehood. They should realise that it is some narrow-minded scientists who emerged as anti-God. The glow-worm that glows in the darkness claims that there is none brighter than it. The light of the glow-worm pales into insignificance in the presence of the blazing light of the Sun. The half-baked knowledge obtained by the scientists similarly pales into insignificance in the

presence of the splendrous wisdom of our ancients. The scientists of today are shining like the glow-worms while our ancient sages shone like the mighty sun itself.

It is sheer ignorance on the part of the scientists to be carried away by the proof furnished by the senses. The scientists should enquire and investigate into their hearts, instead of mechanically probing into machines. Investigation into the heart is far superior to the investigation into the machine. Today man pins his faith on machines which are highly unreliable. Take for example, the computers. There is nothing unique about the computers since they only produce whatever they are fed upon. A flaw in the mechanism will prove disastrous. There are many instances of the wrong results produced by the computers due to the faulty feeding. We hear of computer results which change a pass into a failure and failure into a pass. Hence the proof furnished by the machines is inadequate and highly undependable. But the boy who wrote the examination derives inspiration from his heart, and knows at heart about his excellent performance in the examinations. The heart is the proof of one's performance. Hence the most dependable proof is the proof furnished by the heart.

THE PROOF OF THE HEART:

The heart is also the seat and foundation of justice. Thanks to the greed of man, people of today overturn the very base of justice, by turning justice into injustice and vice versa. Today the courts are not the seats of justice, it is only the human heart which is the seat of justice. All religions uphold the supremacy of justice. Hazrat Mohammed, the prophet of Islam, laid down stern punishment for crimes committed by the people. The punishment which he prescribed for a crime was a hundred lashes. Once, it was found that his own son had committed a crime and Hazrat Mohammed bowing to the inexorable law of justice, sentenced his

own son to a hundred lashes. His son gave up his body at the fiftieth stroke delivered by the whip. When the executors asked Hazrat Mohammed what should they do about the rest of the fifty lashes, he ordered them to deliver the strokes on the tomb of his dead son. See Hazrat Mohammed's tenacious adherence to justice, which transcended the barriers of 'mine' and 'thine'! How sacred! How sublime! But, the law courts today, said to be the seats of justice, flagrantly flout all codes of justice by favouring its own people. People explore the intricacies of law to extricate their own kith and kin from due punishment. It is no justice if it is besmirched by meanness and narrow-mindedness. Sage Gautama expounded the supreme law of justice.

The six systems of philosophy are Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Samkhya, Yoga, Poorva Mimamsa and Uttara Mimamsa. The Nyaya philosophy forms the basis and the very life breath of the remaining systems of philosophy. This philosophy grasped the noble virtues of compassion, harmony and unity and declared that humans alone can enjoy bliss and freedom. The philosophy of this system is based on certain pramanas which facilitate the understanding of certain truths. The word pramana advocates the need for a measure as a precondition for probing into truth. In the word '**Pramana**' (measure) '**Pra**' means before and '**Mana**' means measure. Measure/standard is most necessary to assess quality and quantity of matter, knowledge, ignorance, wisdom etc. The Nyaya philosophy advocates the four proofs which enable us to understand things in their reality. The four proofs are Prathyaksha Pramana (direct proof), Anumana Pramana (inference), Upamana Pramana (comparison), Shabdha Pramana (testimony of sound). This divine system of Nyaya, with the help of the four proofs it propounded, dispels the doubt and fear that lurks in man and demonstrates the existence of Divinity. It lays bare the excellences of mankind and shows us how man may sanctify himself.

PRATYAKSHA PRAMANA:

The Nyaya philosophy brings out the fallibility of the proof based on direct perception by the senses. The proof offered by sense perception is not dependable. The eye that sees, the ear that hears, the tongue that tastes and the nose that inhales, testify to the truth as long as the sense organs are healthy. But a diseased tongue and a jaundiced eye do not offer the real truth. The diseased tongue afflicted by malaria, tastes everything as bitter, jaundiced eye sees everything as yellow. The Nyaya philosophy also advocates the Nyaya mimamsa. The word '**mimamsa**' shows the finality of things. For example, ghee is the finality of milk. Milk, when curdled and churned, brings out butter; and butter, when heated, brings out ghee. The Nyaya philosophy brings out the flaws of the proof offered by direct perception, whereas Nyaya mimamsa shows us how deep investigation and enquiry is ultimately rewarding. Through the proof of Nisakarsha (finality), it shows us, how deep investigation, unravels the ultimate truth. Though curd, butter and ghee are not perceptible in the milk to the eyes directly, they are there hidden in milk and surface only when they are subjected to a variety of processes. The Nyaya mimamsa propounds the truth that things reveal themselves when they are exposed to the search light of flawless investigation and enquiry.

Anumana pramana is based on inference. In this Anumana pramana, conclusions are arrived at based on inference. For example, it is inferred from the presence of cranes at a particular area that there must be water too. People infer from the presence of smoke, the existence of fire.

Upamana pramana makes use of similes and metaphors to drive home facts, for example, the principles of **Pathibhasika** (the apparent), **Vyavaharika** (empirical) and **Paramardhika** (transcendental), are explained by comparing these three principles

to the foam, the wave and the ocean. From the ocean of Paramardhika, arise the waves of Pratibhasika and from the waves of Pratibhasika arises the foam of Vyavaharika. Though the wave and the ocean appear to have different forms, they share the water in common. This comparison is used here to demonstrate the unity amidst diversity.

Shabdapramana (sound) demonstrates the presence of God, by the testimony of sound. The Nyaya philosophy proves the presence of Divinity firmly planting itself on the testimony of the Primordial sound 'AUM.' According to exponents of this philosophy, the primordial sound is Brahman itself; and only a person who has steadied his mind by meditation can experience it. It is said:

One may master all knowledge, and one's adversaries in
argumentation,
One may be mighty like an elephant and fight a battle to the
end.
One may be an emperor reigning over vast kingdoms.
One may give the gifts of gold and count the countless stars in
the sky.
One may reach the region of the moon.
One may master the most intricate yoga.
But it is impossible to achieve the supreme
state of equanimity of mind without controlling
the senses and directing the vision inwards.

SHABDABRAHMAN:

This Shabdabrahman is endowed with **Astaiswaryas** (opulences): Shabdha Brahmamayi; Charachara mayi; Vang mayi; Parapara mayi; Nityananda mayi; Maya mayi; Jyotir mayi; Sri

mayi; Sounds elicit response. Most of the daily activities are performed based on the testimony of sound. Sound can cause sorrow as well as ecstasy, hope as well as depression. Singing (sankeertana) is a sublime harmony of sound and lifts the people to lofty heights. Once Narada went to Mahavishnu and said “O Lord! I come for your darshan now and then. That is my nature. If I wish to see you immediately where can I contact you?” To this Lord Vishnu replied, “**Madh Bhakta, Yatra Gayanthi, Tatra Thistami Narada**” (Where my devotees sing my glory, there I install Myself). Vishnu did not say that He would live there. On the other hand, He said that He would firmly install Himself there. Such is the supreme efficacy of Keerthana (singing). Whereas the explosion of bombs shatters our very ear drums, singing on the other hand, blossoms our heart. The Shabdha Pramana is tantamount to Vedic Pramana. Nyaya runs as an undercurrent amongst all these four Pramanas. Hence, it is imperative for us to hear the sacred and divine sounds. So the Nyaya philosophy said, “O Man! Doing your daily tasks in this secular world, yearn for the vision of truth (sathya darshana) and find Him at last by discriminating between the eternal and the ephemeral.”

SPEECH AND CONSCIENCE:

How can you determine the existence of Truth? We can decide the presence of the Truth by the testimony of Conscience. This conscience has been described as the vibration of the vital Praana. Vaak (speech) arises from this vibration. There is a marked difference between the speech born of mind, and the speech born of a state that transcends the mind. The supreme speech born beyond the region of the mind is termed as **Vibration, Conscience** and **Bhur**. The conscience pervades the body and originates from **Suvaha**. This Suvaha is nothing but **Pragna**. In Vedic parlance Bhur stands for materialisation (body), Bhuva signifies **Vibration** (conscience) and Suvaha signifies **Radiation**. The Rig Veda stems

from speech; Yajur Veda springs from mind and Sama Veda from the Prana.”

Samagana is said to be the most mellifluous harmony of sound. Since Sama originates from prana, we must use it with utmost care. The Yajur Veda is repository of spiritual formulae and is an embodiment of effulgence. Describing the Lord as the very embodiment of light, it seeks to experience the Light. The Rig Veda is the repository of light. The Yajur Veda is the repository of rituals and Sama Veda is the embodiment of sound. These three Vedas are essential for world peace. The Vedas inspire us to chant the glory of the Lord with mantras and delight Him with music. The three Vedas descended on the world to enable man to merge into the Lord by listening and singing His glory. Songs are more powerful than words and verses. You cannot melt the heart of the Lord by mere speech. Whereas speech is dull, singing is highly inspiring. Songs have the superlative capacity of merging the individual soul into the Absolute Soul. The Nyaya philosophy is a sublime philosophy that dispels doubts and regales the human heart.

There is no greater Veda Sadhana than the Sadhana of understanding the six systems of philosophy. The study of the six systems delights our hearts, reveals the mysteries of the universe and imparts the supreme knowledge to us. Ignorant of the sublime Indian literature, the students of today lead wayward lives. The Shaddarshanas contain in themselves the very essence of the scriptures which the sages distilled by profound investigation and enquiry.

