

10. THE VAISESHIKA DARSHANA

Being the smallest in the small,
Becoming the biggest in the big;
Shining as an omnipresent witness,
Brahman is '**Prakruthi**' and
'**Prakruthi**' is Brahman.

Embodiments of Divine Love,

Even before history began, the great seers and sages of yore, endowed with Divine wisdom, heard the voice of Divinity. They probed into the Divine world, enquired and investigate into it and declared to mankind the great wisdom which they heard through the Divine voice. They experienced what they heard.

The universe is made of two entities—**Matter** (Padartha) and the **Spirit** (parartha). But it is Panini who explored the meanings of word, unravelled the secrets of language, harmonised its myriad aspects and imparted it to mankind. It is sage Kanada who probed and investigated into the nature of matter and disseminated the knowledge of his discoveries to the world around. Vaisesika is a system of philosophy expounded by the seer Kanada.

The founder of Vaisesika, after profound investigation into the nature of matter, declared to mankind the impermanence of matter and the permanence of the spirit. All branches of knowledge which exist in the world originate from the Vedas. Setting aside the study of the secular knowledge which dealt with the transient and temporary, the seers of yore devoted their lives to the study of the immortal science of Divinity. By dint of penance and meditation, they perceived the great truths of eternity and shared their sacred knowledge with others.

THE INNATE UNITY:

The world of matter appears to be marked by diversity when it is subjected to physical investigation. But a penetrating search into the inner nature of matter reveals the inner harmony and Divinity inherent in matter. The mountains are made of rocks; the earth is made of clay; the trees are made of wood, and men are made of flesh. Though matter appears to be of diverse nature, differing from substance to substance, they are in truth the manifestations of the five elements. The **‘Vaiseshika’** philosophy declared to mankind that the diversity that marks the world of matter arises out of deluded vision, and exponents of this philosophy affirmed the unity of Atma that harmonises all matter. **‘Visesha’** is nothing but the study of the difference that exists among atoms and Vaiseshika is that which lays bare the **‘Visesha’** (particularity) of a substance.

The Vaiseshika philosophy explores the world of atoms and concludes the truth about matter. The exponents of the philosophy proved that substance does not change, and it is only the forms which change. For example the broken pots merge into earth and become clay. Pots and rock change but matter remains the same. You can cast silver into different moulds and have different forms of silver like tumbler, plates etc.; but silver is the same. Hence it is proved beyond doubt that it is only the forms that change, but substance remains changeless. Similarly they traced all forms of sound to the primeval sound **‘AUM.’** The sounds are many but the source is the same. The seven notes in a harmonium sound different but the source of the sound is the same **‘AUM.’**

The **‘Vaiseshika’** philosophy finally affirms the permanence of Spirit as well as matter. This system of philosophy bases its conclusions on facts. It reveals the equality of man and woman arguing that man and woman may differ in gender; but as humans,

they are one and the same. The male and the female are equally required for creation.

THE NEED FOR HARMONY:

The 'Vaiseshika' philosophy propounded unity and harmony, not discord. What is the cause for the miserable plight of the world today? It is by developing discord and differences that mankind has fallen low. It is by disregarding the unity of the spirit that man has gone down to the deepest depths. The want of peace in the world can be traced to the selfishness of man. Man expects much from society without contributing anything to it. How can you expect good from society without your doing any good to it? If you strive for the peace and upliftment of the society, then the society too will strive for your peace and upliftment. The Vaiseshika philosophy asserted in unmistakable terms that you are the author of the pain and the pleasure that you undergo in the world. Do not ask the world how much it contributed to your joy, but ask yourself how much you contributed to the welfare of the society. The Vaiseshika philosophy asserts the duty which we owe to society. Hence it is imperative on the part of man to know how much his acts and deeds contribute to the welfare and well being of mankind.

The atoms are packed with infinite power. The Vaiseshika philosophy exhorts man not to be satisfied with the mere appearance of things but to probe into the inner nature of the substances.

The philosophy stands as a luminous lamp of Truth, which radiates Divine effulgence at all times, by defining Truth as the eternal transcendental Reality. It addresses man thus, "O man! We are birds of the same nest; we are the children of the same mother; we are the flowers of the same creeper; we are citizens of the same

country.” Why should we harbour hatred? In truth, you hate yourself when you hate others. The body is the cage in which the soul is encased. The cage can lodge the bird as long as it is a fledgling. Once the wings grow, the bird wings its way out of the cage. We have to seek the shelter of the body till we attain the Atmic enlightenment. Once the wings of the Atmic wisdom grow in us, we abandon the nest by developing detachment.

We are the children of the same mother, Mother Earth.

We are made of clay. This can be proved by the fact that there is clay in the enfolded palms of new born babies. Even after a thorough cleansing, the baby carries the clay in its palm after a few hours of resting. The body which is made of clay, returns to clay at the time of death. The king and the servant, the millionaire and the pauper come from the earth and return to the earth again. Even gems come from the earth. They do not grow on trees. If we realise this truth, it will be possible for us to consider ourselves to be the children of mother Earth.

We are flowers of the same creepers. Our minds are the flowers that grow on the creeper of the heart. The flowers may be different but the creeper is the same. **We are the children of the same race!** We all belong to the race of humanity but not to the race of birds and beasts. Since we belong to the illustrious race of humanity, we must conduct ourselves in a sublime manner. We are the waves, born in the ocean of **Satchidananda**. Since we are born of the same race, we should radiate the oneness of humanity without harbouring hatred against any one. This great system of Vaiseshika upholds the oneness of mankind and the existence of Divinity and exhorts us to lead sublime lives. The so-called exponents of modern Vaiseshika philosophy impart to people only bookish knowledge, without experiencing the noble tenets of this system in their daily lives. Hence, their teachings do not light up the hearts of people. The true exponents of Vaiseshika are scarce

indeed! The seers of India, endowed with wisdom, transcended the realms of the physical world and leaped into the region of the Supermind. To those seers who gazed from the gigantic heights of the Supermind, all our secular achievements appeared paltry. The exponents of the Vaiseshika philosophy successfully explained the subtle meanings of words and the substances which the words signify. But unfortunately, today there is no proper and satisfactory linguistic explanations of the words current amongst us. We pronounce W-A-L-K as 'WAK.' There is no explanation for "L" being silent there, but Panini's grammar offers most rational and convincing explanation for words and sounds.

We distinguish between good and bad, though in reality there is nothing like good and bad in this world. Good and bad are in fact a matter of time. But as long as we are bound by the bodily delusion, we must know the difference between good and bad.

UPADHANA AND NIMITTA:

Since man is sans discrimination, detachment has become a burden to him. Since he is devoid of the Atmic knowledge, body has become a burden to him. Since he is devoid of Love, the mind becomes a burden to him. All grief of the world can be traced to the lack of discrimination. We should exercise our discrimination to find out what is **Adhara** (support) and what is **Adheya** (supported). The potter makes pots, but without clay and water, the potter cannot make pots. Hence clay and water constitute '**Upadhana karana**' (material cause). The potter who makes the pots is only an instrument and hence he is the '**Nimitta Karana**' (efficient cause).

Similarly, Divinity is the cause and creation is the consequence. But some scientists of today do not believe in the creator, and they base themselves on creation alone. They pride themselves on their achievements and parade their knowledge. For

example, they declare that they could turn salt water into drinking water by the process of desalination. But this involves huge expenses, amounting to crores. They further assert that they can create water by combining hydrogen and oxygen. The scientists, carried away by their achievements, ignore God who is the creator of hydrogen and oxygen. These people feel no gratitude to God for all that He has done to them. We express our thankfulness to a person who hands over the kerchief when it falls from our hands. When we are thankful to people for such a negligible act of goodness, how much more grateful should we feel towards God, who has granted to mankind the gift of life. The Vaiseshika philosophy upholds the permanence of the individual soul, nature and matter and for this God is the '**Adhara.**' The exponents of the Vaiseshika system propounded that the universe is made of atoms, but no two atoms are the same. The '**Visesha**' (particularity) lies in the difference that exists between one atom and the other. Since this system upholds the particularity of atoms (visesha) the system has been known as '**Vaiseseha.**'

The exponents of Vaiseshika system marvelled at the wondrous creation of God. Saint Purandaradasa marvelled at the might of the Lord and said, "Who tinted the parrot in green and painted its beak with red? Who coloured the peacock in many splendoured beauty?" All this speaks volumes to the majesty of the creator of the universe.

Man discovered the atom and created the atomic bomb. But he lives in perpetual fear of the weapon that he himself had created. That is why Churchill remarked "Man has known everything but he has not known himself."

Prahalada said to Hiranyakasapu:

You have conquered the three worlds in a trice, O Father!
But you have not conquered the sensory world and the world of the mind.

Man has become a slave to his senses. He is the slave of his senses from dawn to dusk. Subdued by the senses, which are outside him, how can he ever hope to conquer the internal organs of Manas, Buddhi, Chitta and Ahamkara? It is said, "**He who succumbs to the inner foes, can never hope to defeat his enemies outside.**" Man has become a victim of his own senses and is subjected to sorrow and suffering. But he does not enquire into the cause of his sorrow. He takes shelter in destiny and consoles himself that he was destined to suffer. But it is not proper on the part of man to trace everything to destiny.

There is nothing that man cannot achieve by human effort. With a determined effort, man can imprison the air in his palm; he can split the sky into pieces and hold them in his possession; he can drink up the water in all the oceans as water in a tumbler; he can hold fire on the palm of his hand. It only needs a sincere effort, to achieve anything in life.

Today, man has made himself into a '**Cinematic**' man. (Ma-Ni-Si if reversed, becomes Si-Ni-Ma, meaning movies). Everything he does is steeped in artificiality. Hence he becomes a slave to his senses. The man who restrains his mind is a real man. The man who has not conquered his mind is a man-in-form, but not a man-in-reality. Only when he controls the mind completely, he can be called a true man.

The Vaiseshika system of philosophy unravels the mysteries of the inner world and bares the secrets of creation. As the tiny seed contains a tree with all the twigs, branches, fruits and flowers in it, every atom contains in it the entire creation. The

Vaiseshika philosophy explains how the macrocosm is contained in the microcosm.

