

## I. Nyaya – The philosophy of logic and reasoning

- A. Nyaya system of philosophy established by sage Gautama
1. Nyaya is concerned with conditions of correct knowledge and the means of receiving this knowledge
  2. Nyaya is predominantly based on reasoning and logic
  3. Using systematic reasoning, Nyaya attempt to discriminate valid knowledge from invalid knowledge
  4. Objective is to seek valid knowledge of the external world and its relationship with the mind and self
  5. The ultimate goal of nyaya, like that of the other systems of Indian philosophy, is liberation
- B. All 6 schools aim to describe the nature of the external world and its relationship to the individual
1. In this attempt, the 6 divide their study into 2 major categories:
    - a. Study of unmanifested reality
    - b. Study of manifest reality
  2. In nyaya, both aspects of reality divided into 16 major divisions, called padarthas
    - a. pramana, the 4 sources of knowledge (Perception, Inference, Comparison, Testimony )
    - b. prameya, the 12 objects of knowledge
    - c. samsaya, doubt or the state of uncertainty
    - d. prayojana, the aim
    - e. drstanta, example
    - f. siddhanta, doctrine
    - g. ayayava, the constituents of inference
    - h. tarka, hypothetical argument
    - i. nirnaya, conclusion
    - j. badha, discussion
    - k. jalpa, wrangling
    - l. vitanda, irrational argument
    - m. hetvabhasa, specious reasoning
    - n. chala, unfair reply
    - o. jati, generality based on a false analogy
    - p. nigrahsthana, the grounds for defeat
  3. Subjects discussed under pramana, source of knowledge, are most important & profoundly expounded

## II. The 4 sources of valid knowledge

- A. Perception is foremost - produced by contact of senses with objects of the world
- B. Inference - the process of knowing something through the medium of a sign that is invariably related to it
1. Inference involves process of analyzing memories, correlations, and uncontaminated arguments
  2. It is necessary to state inference in systematic and comprehensive chain of arguments - five premises:
 

Pratijjna (fact), Hetu (reasons), Udaharana (example), Upanaya (application), Nigamana (conclusion)

Example: (1) John is mortal (fact); (2) Because he is a man (reason); (3) All men are mortal—for example, Napoleon, Lincoln, Socrates, and so on (example); (4) John is a man (application); (5) Therefore John is mortal (conclusion)

C. Comparison - comes with the perception of the similarity between description of unfamiliar object and its actual appearance

D. Testimony - knowledge derived from words or sentences

1. Not all verbal knowledge is valid
2. Valid testimony comes from the statement of a person who speaks and acts the way he thinks
  - a. Such a person's mind, action, and speech are in perfect harmony, and accepted as an authority
  - b. His verbal or written statement is considered to be a valid source of knowledge
4. Veda is considered the expression realized truth

### III. Concept of the Individual Soul

A. Nyaya states the soul is a unique substance with qualities: desires, aversions, pleasures, pains, cognition

- a. The Soul is indestructible and eternal, and its attribute is consciousness
- b. Because it is not limited by time and space, soul is also seen as infinite or all-pervading
- c. There are many souls because one person's experiences do not overlap those of another person

B. Nyaya gives numerous arguments to prove the existence of the soul.

1. The body is not the soul because immaterial consciousness is not an attribute of a material body
2. Senses cannot explain imagination, memory, and ideation—these don't depend on external senses
3. Mind can not be soul because mind is considered to be an imperceptible substance
4. The soul is not mere consciousness or knowledge but is the knower of knowledge
5. In sum, soul is not consciousness but is a substance having consciousness as its attribute

C. Desire, volition, pain, and pleasure cannot be explained by the body, senses, or mind.

1. The phenomenon of memory must depend upon a permanent entity—the soul
2. One's own soul can be known through mental perception
3. Someone else's soul can only be inferred

### IV. The Concept of Liberation

A. Like other systems of Indian philosophy, nyaya maintains that ultimate goal of human life is liberation

1. Liberation means absolute freedom from all pain and misery
2. Implies a state completely released from all bondage and connection with the body
3. In liberation, the soul is unconditionally and absolutely freed from all shackles forever

B. To attain liberation, one has to acquire true knowledge of soul and of all objects of experience

1. Nyaya prescribes 3-stage path for reaching goal of liberating knowledge
  - a. 1<sup>st</sup> - Study of scriptures
  - b. 2<sup>nd</sup> - One must use his own reasoning powers to ponder over what he has learned
  - c. 3<sup>rd</sup> - One must confirm his knowledge, by practicing that truth in his life
3. The truth realized within dispels misunderstanding concerning ego and the not-self

4. When this happens, person ceases to be moved by passions and begins to perform duties selflessly
5. Fire of true knowledge roasts past karma seeds, making them unable to germinate

## V. Concept of God

- A. God is considered to be the operative cause of creation, maintenance, and destruction of the universe
  1. God does not create world out of nothing or himself but rather eternal atoms of space, time, mind, soul
  2. Creation of universe refers to ordering of these eternal entities, coexistence with God, into mortal world
  3. Thus God, as the first operative cause of the universal forces, is the creator of the world
    - a. God is also the preserver
    - b. Causes atoms to hold together & continue existence in particular order - maintains physical universe
    - c. Also the destroyer of universe - lets loose forces of destruction when energies of mortal world require it
  4. God is one, infinite, and eternal, and universe of space and time, of mind and soul, does not limit him
- B. Nyaya provides a few arguments to establish the theory of God
  1. 1<sup>st</sup> is the causal argument
  2. 2<sup>nd</sup> argument is based on “the unseen” or “the unknown,” and translated as providence or fate
  3. 3<sup>rd</sup> argument based on scriptural testimony