

Seminar January 2009

**"Faith, in true sense is a lively link connecting the mortal with the immortal."**

Dear associates in the Natural Path,  
The topic of this seminar is taken from the book Dawn of Reality where the Master makes this seminal statement. I humbly share the following thoughts.

1. When we ask the question what is faith on the surface it may look like blind trust. But we immediately are aware in the spirit deep within that such a statement is naïve and uninformed simplicity. In fact faith is the opposite of blind trust. Faith is essentially an inter relationship of the divine and the human and in its matured state is an irrevocable inter personal relationship Faith the human heart knows in the deepest and most intimate sense, is something eternal and this is profoundly connected with all human beings.
2. It is in fact to honour this simple truth of our inter connectedness with all that is and the divine, all the religions seem to have arisen. The religions and spiritual traditions do in fact widely differ on many issues. Yet they all agree that there is a divine presence in the world and that human beings honour this presence best by leading meaningful and ethical lives in tune with Nature. This profoundly spiritual truth has been known in all times and places. And the great texts and traditions of the past still speak to us clearly

today. With spiritual faith, our heart and mind open up and guide us in our search for Truth and Reality. Faith in the spirituality of life is what makes our spiritual path possible. If there is no faith in the interconnectedness of ourselves with the Divine there is no scope for the existence of the science of Yoga. However this faith gets fully established only through the grace of a Master of calibre. Master says "Faith is that unbreakable link which, once established, cannot be broken. An abhyasi who does not develop faith can never progress." (SS-276)

3. Faith is not an attitude but a conviction and conduct based on a right and proper relationship with the Divine. It is not static and rigid belief system but is a dynamic growth of consciousness which matures in strength and depth as we nourish that relationship with the Divine. Many people think of "faith" as either a feeling or a collection of ideas that represent one's convictions. Although both of these concepts involve elements of Faith, it is essentially a firm persuasion of a way of life that lives and grants a perfume uniquely fresh and refreshing. Faith may sound like a form of belief, but belief is actually a fixation upon a version of the truth. When a belief becomes rigid, seeking and growth are not possible.
4. Through various researches in Physics we are now asked to have to shift to a new view where time, space and physicality are liberated from the constraints which we were taught to believe that they had. If we believe that we exist in a fixed location in space, and that time must always pass by the clock we have to

think again when we remember how time collapses during meditations.

5. I understand that subatomic particles pop in and out of physical manifestation millions of times per second, just when and where they feel like it. Their disregard for time is perplexing, to say the least, as they are stated to respond immediately to events in their future and even time travels backward to alter their past when it suits them. Now, we can all identify with the idea of creating a different future based on decisions that we make now, but cannot even think in terms of creating a different past. If I have understood the physicists well, that is what subatomic particles do, right there in the lab. As a result, in the mathematics of Quantum physics today, one of the necessary tools is the concept of negative time, that is the ability of a particle to send a message into its past in order to change its own history. When the master in raja yoga tries to clear the past impressions it is no different from acting in the past. The cleaning process in our system I believe will be better and more understood from this angle in the days to come.
6. Another very interesting aspect I have also read about the subatomic particles. They are friendly, and when they bump into another particle, they become friends and carry on communicating with each other. The fact that they may become separated does not reduce their willingness to communicate. Viewed from this point of view it would be clear for us to understand how every Samskara is invariably linked to many others and twists and turns of the past when acted upon by the

Will of the master become so very malleable and permit changes in the patterns of the past actions. The capacity of the special will is such. And this one needs to believe to derive full benefit and if it really becomes Faith the help would be immense in the cause of Yoga. The speed with which special will works, even as these subatomic particles is a matter of surprise. Einstein said that nothing exceeds the speed of light, but I understand that the sub atomic particles do communicate over huge distances virtually instantly. If there is a limit to the speed of transmitted thought, then that speed of thought has to be millions of times faster than the speed of light. With this spiritual faith, which means an open heart and an open mind, we can discover more about Reality and Truth and what it means to humanity.

7. Developing and preserving a spiritual faith may not be a comfortable path. In living a life of Faith we are often called upon to relinquish material success and partially rational, scientific beliefs owned and accepted by persons who live by what we may call consensus reality. Living by Faith demands a constant capacity to leap deep into our heart where the irrevocable knot with the divine is felt pulsating and resonating the Faith itself- this we are told in Hindu tradition is the Brahma mudi- that is a single string with a knot on both ends. We come to know during meditations that the act of leaping by itself is not sufficient and that demands a conviction that is strong enough to enable us to remain out in the deep abyss still persevering

with the faith. Faith as I have always been saying is belief under circumstances that are impossible.

8. In contrast to the Christian and Islam, the faith of many Eastern beliefs is less focused on divine textual authority. It should be noted that the Vedas is not book and is something that is passed on for several generations by word of mouth until it was written and published. They are *apourusheya*. Even in the Buddhist cannons it is held that they merely point to the Moon thus indicating that truth can only come from personal experience. In Hinduism, the spiritual goal of *moksha*, or liberation from the cycle of rebirth, may be pursued through the paths of knowledge, action or devotion and Yoga. It is the spiritual evolution that a person has when he develops the knowledge of interdependency through Viveka, Vairagya, *avinabhava sambhanda* and Bhakti culminating in surrender that grants one faith rather than faith in any book or text accepted on faith.
9. The power of faith is indisputable. Individuals throughout history have been prepared to sacrifice their most valued possessions, including their lives, as a result of their trust in God. Many spiritual traditions celebrate those who confronted the challenges of their beliefs: Abraham's faith in divine will, for example, led him to countenance the otherwise intolerable action of sacrificing his own son. So is the case of Siriyala of Saivism. It is not proposed to deal with these aspects of faith in this paper.
10. Faith and doubt are inextricably linked in spiritual experience. In his teachings Lord Buddha

acknowledged the limitations of blind faith, requiring that his students should always test his words. So does Mahatma Sriramchandraji Maharaj of Shahjahanpur. The yogic tradition states that three elements are needed to make spiritual progress: great faith, great doubt and great perseverance. Faith is required to discover and trust the inherent truth of teaching; doubt to challenge and overcome superficial understanding; and perseverance to continue despite distracting hopes and fears. In recognizing the complexities and hardships of a spiritual path, our religions and beliefs also celebrate the enduring human determination to overcome them exhibited by many saints and seers.

11. Rev. Babuji Maharaj states that there should be faith in oneself, in the method chosen to be followed and in the Goal itself. Faith in our capacity to achieve the goal is fully developed only when we understand our true nature as pure and simple unalloyed consciousness. This is not had for the asking or imagining the same nor is just a matter of confidence. It is sincere and assiduous Sadhana alone that leads to this conclusion about our true nature. Further it is only then the faith in the method develops as it is purely spiritual rid off all the superfluities of religion and dogma. Our method is simple and least complicated compared to other systems of yoga. Again faith in our goal as 'nothingness' is not a matter of persuasion and argument but is a matter of experience or as we prefer to call Imperience that we have during our meditations and the periodical influx of

Prana. It is true that we do not have this basis for faith before we practice the system. It is here we go by faith in a person who has or had a personal experience of the system. But the nature of Pranahuti is such that in the very first exposure to it we feel our connection to the Divine getting its intimation through the imperience of Peace and deep quiet that passeth understanding.

12. In addition to the various methods of knowing like Pratyaksha (perceptual knowledge), Anumana (inference), Upamana (example) and Sruti (Scriptural knowledge) some thinkers have added another category of developing knowledge called Apta Vacana (words of wisdom of those dear and near to us). This fifth one may classify even as Faith and thus Faith becomes a means of knowing. It is thus through some agency we get to know of a Master or his method. On their word some try to follow the system with some faith and they consider that good enough. Master states “Some people take a very erroneous view of faith. They believe that faith alone is enough to solve their problem of life no matter what the path they have adopted, or the guide they have submitted to might be. Nothing probably can be more misleading than this absurd belief. (DR-82)” We are therefore advised by the Master that we should examine the merits of the system and the claims of the Master to guide us and only when we are convinced about their relative merits to the task of realisation we accept them. Master says “When we are, finally convinced of the merits of the thing we may stick to it with faith and constancy. Faith thus reposed shall be genuine and lasting while faith

promoted by inducement offered by outwardly attractive features and display of petty materialistic achievements is no faith at all but may rightly be termed as persuasion. It has no stable foundation to rest upon and disappears under ordinary adverse circumstances. (DR-79)”

13. When we accept and follow a guide Master says and as we know “...we naturally begin to feel an inward attraction for him and think him to be the very person who can shape our destiny. The feeling gradually develops into faith and we begin to love him. We submit to his views with due regard to his personality and proceed along the path under his guidance. The experience of achievements gained during the course convinces us further of the extraordinary capacities of the Master and we begin to look upon him as a super-human being. Our faith now is greatly helpful to us in our spiritual progress. It dispels clouds of doubt and uncertainty and removes difficulties and obstructions from our path. (DR-81,82 ) It is then we find that “Faith itself is existence of substratum (base) on which Realisation begins. (SS-218) Thus we find the Master stating “True faith is really an unspeakable virtue which is beyond the scope of religion; it is the dauntless courage which leads us on to success, it is that ubiquitous force which makes our path smooth, it is in fact the only thing that solves our problem of life. (DR-83,84)”
14. Faith in the Master is not had in the beginning. The Master expresses the growth and development of Faith and in his own words they are “In the spiritual

phase, faith in the guru or the Master starts when the sadhaka begins to feel that whatever the teacher gives out is correct and to his advantage. When it is so he accepts it with submission. By and by when he begins to feel more and more convinced and satisfied by experience and association, his reliance on the Master grows stronger and his submission increases. Faith thus begins to develop in a way and he begins to assume an unquestioning attitude. This usual routine is applicable to those who aspire for the realisation of God and proceed on the path with their eyes wide open.”(SS-235) “Trusting and believing, in the sense that everything coming from the Master is agreeable and acceptable as the very right thing, is the beginning of faith. But so far it is only a physical approach or, in other words, only a set-up for the foundation of an edifice, to appear subsequently as faith. At a lower level it appears in a crude form with the idea of self elation in the background. This too is not after all bad since something may be better than nothing. When this feeling firmly settles in, losing its conscious knowledge, it is then the beginning of real faith. Having built up faith in that manner one is then moving actually in the footsteps of the Master, imbibing all that the Master has within himself. This, being a rare attainment, may be gained by only a few, but that does not mean that one should on that ground give up his efforts for it. (SS-171)”

15. I thank you all for sharing my understanding of the lively link of Faith we have with the Divine.
16. Pranam.