



POWER OF FAITH

- C.L. GULATI

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Preface

Along with love, faith is the bedrock of devotion. Worship of God in any mode or form becomes meaningless if not accompanied by faith. At one stage faith becomes synonymous with the religion we follow.

Even ordinarily, faith plays a key role in our daily life, our relations, our dealings with others. Men of wisdom advise that it is better to believe all and be cheated by one than to disbelieve all and be cheated by none. So, while faith fosters harmony, the lack of it results only in tension. Disbelief neither helps the bearer nor the one it is directed to.

Faith has, therefore, numerous dimensions, countless forms and varied roles. In view of this and specially because the word is so closely related to spirituality, the Magazine Department of the Sant Nirankari Mandal rightly chose FAITH as the theme for its Special Souvenir brought out on the historic occasion of the 61st Annual Nirankari Sant Samagam in Delhi in November, 2008. The Souvenir carried a number of articles on the subject contributed by learned saints from India and abroad in Hindi, Punjabi and English.

Like last year, this time also it was decided, on demand from readers, to publish the English articles carried by the Souvenir in the form of a book, so that they have a long lasting use. While the selection and compilation of the articles was made by Rev C.L. Gulati, Secretary, Sant Nirankari Mandal and Member Incharge, Magazine Department, the undersigned edited the same and gave the book its title . Power of Faith as also its present shape, under the able guidance of the Hon^{ble} Members of the Screening Committee attached to the Publications Department.

It is trusted that our esteemed readers as well as preachers of the Mission both in India and abroad will find the book interesting and useful. While faith in God and Satguru (the True Master) has been discussed in detail, several scholars have dealt with its social, cultural and moral aspects also.

The Publications Department is grateful to Rev C.L. Gulati and his colleagues, specially the Editors of the English section of the Souvenir . Rev Joginder Singh Ji and Rev Des Raj Ahuja Ji, for this valuable addition to the English literature of

the Sant Nirankari Mission. The department is also thankful to the Honorable Members of the Screening Committee for their valuable guidance. I pray to His Holiness Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj to bless all the saints who have contributed in the effort so that they continue to serve the Mission and its literature with greater and greater spirit of devotion and dedication.

- Kirpa Sagar
Member Incharge Publications

Delhi
June 10, 2009

Power of Faith

- Prashant Lande (USA)

What is Faith?

What, after all, is faith? The dictionary calls it rather blandly, trust or confidence. But those who experience it, know that it is a living thing, a flame that lives in the heart, a connection with the Source of all life, a certainty of being loved, cherished and taken care of, and a strength that sweeps away all fear and doubt. Those who are robed in faith are unshakeable, invulnerable and immovable. No disaster can confound them, for their faith tells them that all that comes from the Creator is good. In bad times they stand steady as a rock, undaunted. In good times they are miracle workers, alight with energy. In touch with the Invisible, they can do the impossible. And as their faith deepens and strengthens, they attract miracles, good fortune and deep impenetrable peace. For faith is akin to surrender and through surrender one enters the domain of God.

Faith is the sole sustaining power of those who walk the spiritual path. It is faith that gives them the courage and strength to take risks and follow hunches, the trust that they will be looked after, the power to do the impossible and the willingness to surrender.

Nothing is deeper and stronger than faith. Faith is like love. It is above expectations. Nothing can match the connection that you feel when you experience faith.

~~F~~ Faith is not belief, it is love.

Faith is not belief, it is not half, it not total.

Faith is not belief because there is no doubt in it,
so how can you believe?q

But how does faith begin?

Here's a story of a village struck with terrible drought. Finally, the village priest gathered everyone together for a pilgrimage to the mountain, where they would pray together and ask for the rain to return. At the mountain top his eye fell on a young boy, clad in a raincoat. "You foolish boy," he said, "don't you know that we have not seen a drop of rain for years?" The boy replied, "I have a cold, father. If we are going to ask God for rain, can you imagine the way back from the mountain? It's going to be such a downpour that I need to be prepared." At that moment, a great crash was heard in the sky and the first drops began to fall. Oh, for the absoluteness of childlike faith.

For those whose lives have been overshadowed by doubts and despair, there comes a time when faith breaks out like the sun from behind dark clouds and starts shining brilliantly in the life. Mostly, this happens through a direct experience of God or when a prayer uttered from the very depths for our heart is answered beyond our wildest dreams. Then we cannot but believe.

By their very helplessness and trust, the faithful trigger divine intervention. Just like the parent, who is so moved by faith and trust of his child in him, that he will either kill or die to protect it, the Divine too will move mountains to respond to the faith reposed in Him.

True Faith

But how do we distinguish between blind faith and the true faith that burnishes our lives and supports and strengthens us? Perhaps the single most defining characteristic is that true faith is based on personal experience, while blind faith arises from a belief system, or through various ego-based convictions. The belief that God is only on our side and not on that of those from differing faiths is an example of blind faith.

True faith is simply experience; it rests on one's experience of reality. To be able merely to define a truth, is not to know that truth, really. One must experience it. Only by such experience may one say that he has achieved true faith. Certainly, reason is above blind faith. But enlightened faith, like any experimental test, is far, far above ordinary reason.

It is only when we are willing to leave behind the comforting security of blind faith and take a step into the unknown that real faith dawns. Once we step into the path of faith, life changes dramatically.

Living by Faith

The life of one who lives in faith is extraordinarily different from one who tries to control his/her life through planning, cast-iron guarantee, astrological forecasts or through the external security of money, status, power, control of others and manipulation.

Faith makes you less critical and more accepting. I liken the life of faith to a video game where you have to make the moves that guarantee success or failure, but you know that all these moves are pre-planned. Someone out there has already created the program, which we are expressing through our actions. Secondly, one is no longer insistent that life should work according to fixed ideas. While you act as vigorously as you can to achieve your goals, you surrender the outcome.

One experiences being part of a flow that operates with mysterious purpose. The people and opportunities we need for our greater growth, materialize; coincidences abound. You call someone and they say they were thinking of you; you express an idle wish for an opportunity and behold, it comes to you. Your path is paved for you before your eyes and all you need to do is to walk on it unflinching. It is thrilling to be in such close contact with and in co-operation with a Higher Power that seems to delight in giving us what we need, sometimes even pampering us silly.

Living by Faith

How does it happen that God takes such good care of the faithful? Is He guilty of partisanship? It may look that way but the truth is that God is constant; it is we who move closer or more distant, depending on our relationship with Him. The closer we are, the more powerfully do we feel the Divine presence and guidance in all that we do. Just as the sun remains constant but the earth swings closer to it in summer and therefore basks in its warmth, and moves away in winter and therefore, endures bitter cold, it is our movement that determines the proportion of God's presence in our lives. Those, who live in faith, move ever closer and consequently find their lives more blessed.

To live by faith is the most practical thing a person can do. Most people, in the name of being practical put God last in their lives. They wonder, then, why nothing ever goes quite right for them. A devotee, on the other hand, in the name of practicality (since his dedication is to truth), puts God first in his life. He attains fulfillment on every level of his existence. To his continued amazement, he finds himself protected in adversity, saved from the jaws of disaster, and guided in every crisis in ways that often leave his worldly friends shaking their heads in wonder.

Transcending Fear and Doubt

When you know somebody is really behind you, who loves you so dearly that you can't even imagine, then the surrender has happened – when a cup of water feels, I am in the ocean and the water in the cup knows that I am connected with the ocean, it gains strength. Belongingness happens. When there is belongingness, there is no fear. It cuts the roof of fear.

When you enter this timeless dimension of the present (by letting go of resistance), change often comes about in strange ways without the need for a great deal of doing on your part. Life becomes helpful and cooperative.

Life becomes more and more silken, conflict-free and harmonious, for we have submerged our own will and found our joy in the will of the Lord. Our faith has delivered us to the sanctuary we sought, that zone of perfect peace, joy and life that some may call 'enlightenment'...

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FAITH

- Naranjan Singh, IAS, (Retd), Chandigarh

In common parlance, Faith means and includes belief, confidence and reliance. In English Dictionary it means, trust in a person or a thing, fidelity to persons.

The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics referring to Faith mentions, every act of religious faith shows two sides or aspects, a cognitive and a volitional. It is at once an affirmation of truth and a surrender to the truth affirmed. Apart from the first, it would be blind; apart from the second, without practical significance. Here volitional aspect is concerned with trust and the cognitive aspect is concerned with belief.

Faith is thus a state of mind of a person with respect to the object of his Faith. The object may be of this world or related to God. All depends on the sense of devotion to the object which decides the quality or depth of Faith. Faith can be theistic or atheistic, enlightened or blind.

Man is a conscious and rational being. In the age of science, man must use this power of reasoning, ratiocination and scientific temper to select his object of Faith. We very well know that Faith divorced from reason has played havoc in history. Religious fundamentalism and religious fanaticism resulting in religious terror and

bloodshed is the greatest problem of the present age. The whole world is becoming increasingly a hostage to this Satanic problem.

Religious pluralism or God-pluralism is the direct offshoot of blind faith nurtured by religious coterie. It has divided society both vertically and horizontally:

*Koi Hindu Koi Muslim Koi Sikh Isai Ey;
Har Kise Ne Apni Duina Vakho Vakh Banai Ey.*

- Avtar Bani: 318

*Guru Peer Te Agoo Jag De Jag Noon Vandī Jande Ne;
Apo Apni Chaudhar Khatar Bandian Vich Phutt Pande Ne.
Zat Mazhab Te Varan Ashram Ih Jo Kayee Deewaran Ne;
Ghar Ghar Vich Jo Aggan Laggian Inhan Dia Hi Karan Ne.*

- Avtar Bani: 326

With the present advancement in communication technology and means of destruction, it is of paramount importance that we scan, analyze and examine our Faith. We have to see whether our Faith is conducive to the evolution of humanism and universal brotherhood which are inherently essential for peace and prosperity of the society at large.

What is enlightened Faith as opposed to blind faith? Naturally, it is to be based on and rooted in the light of knowledge. No faith should be simply inherited or accepted because the society wants us to do so. A man of reason should test the faith and see the results. If a medicine cures, it should be acceptable; if not, then it is certainly to be avoided, at all costs. With an accepted maxim, *Religion Unites, Never Divides*, all religious Faiths are to be judged accordingly. Unfortunately, we see that all our present day religious systems of Faith have inbuilt points of confrontation with each other. The present day clash of civilizations is more a clash of religious systems breeding hydra-headed virus of religious terrorism. The effective remedy to this global malady is the light of knowledge which should inform Faith. It is the knowledge of the Ultimate Reality, the basic truth of the cosmos. All the scriptures have consensus that man must know his self and its origin.

*Man Toon Jot Sarup Hai,
Apna Mool Jachhan.*

- Adi Granth (441)

So the Faith with consequent trust or belief must find its roots in the knowledge of God which shall result in self-knowledge. Such a true Faith is scientific and based on universally accepted values. It relates to the reality which has objective existence and timeless validity. Why do we have faith in water, air, fire? Because, not only do we have knowledge about their objective existence, but also these elements are practically related to us in the organic sense. These elements are constituting parts of our organism. Similarly, to begin with, the objective existence of ultimate substance of the cosmos and its relation to our organism is to be identified and made part of our faith, trust and belief system. If it is not so, Faith would be counter-productive and sheer traditionalism.

The knowledge of the Ultimate Reality makes us rise above matter and limited philosophies. This knowledge evolves a cosmic vision where the embodied consciousness becomes cosmic. True Faith reflects this cosmic aspect of an enlightened person.

Brahm Giani Ka Sagal Aakar,

Brahm Giani Aap Nirankar.

- Adi Granth (274)

True Faith and Grace go together

Such a Faith and consequent cosmic status is a grace of the Master of the day. No other method, religious act, scholasticism or good feelings can evolve or create this type of Faith. When the Master bestows Knowledge of God (The Ultimate Reality), the real relation with the cosmos is created.

True Faith is evolved with devotion to the Master of the day who not only bestows knowledge of God, but also unites us with congregation of saints. It is in the congregation that our mind is changed and becomes replete with love, compassion and humanism.

Sadh Sangat Upjai Biswas,

Bahar Bhitari Sada Pargas.

- Adi Granth (343)

Faith and Grace of the contemporary Master go together. The scriptures enjoin upon us to identify the Master, and then learn at his feet the art of living worthy of human beings.

Avtar Bani Says:-

*Bhana Manne Nirankar Da Satgur Te Vishwas Kare;
Kahe Avtar Sada Hoe Sukhia Dev Lok Vich Vas Kare.*

Avtar Bani: 277

This is the logical end of a life of Faith in the true sense of the term. Any other Faith is only psychological and is a massive illusion which is fast alienating man from man.

The present day organized religious are projecting a Faith which is more related to the historic aspect of the Master. The core teaching related to God-knowledge and human values is not stressed, much less practiced. These days, to be religious is more to be punctilious in observance of religious proceduralism than anything else. **The aspect of 'how to worship' is dominant over 'whom to worship'**. Has anyone ever heard at religious places where millions of the faithful worship, claiming that God is showable, knowable or perceivable? No. Why, because the interpretation and projection of the bygone prophets is more for ratifying the mode of worship invented by the priestly class. The Faith, whatever the religion, is limited to the name of God and has nothing to do with the named substance i.e. God as an Existent. And then it revolves round the physique of the Prophets, Gurus and Masters having nothing to do with their impersonal, eternal and cosmic aspect. For example, an analysis of Faith will reveal that we are attached to Jessu and not Christ, to Krishna (The Son of Devki), not his cosmic self and same is the case with all other Prophets. To have true Faith, we must revert from the historical to the essential, from the physical to the spiritual. On this reversion depends the utility of Faith and also the destiny of Mankind.

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FAITH AND BELIFE

- Col. (Retd). Dr. Karam Singh, Delhi

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"Leap and the net will appear."

- Les Brown

*"We turn to God for help when our foundations are shaking,
only to learn that it is God who is shanking them."*

- Charles C. West

Faith and Belief are not the same. There is a great difference between the two. Belief is a notion, guess, assumption, imagination, thinking or supposition that something exists or is true, especially without first-hand knowledge. Faith is sureness, certitude, complete trust or confidence, true to the facts, strict conformity to truth or fact and is based on first-hand knowledge.

The word ~~f~~faith is derived from the Latin word ~~F~~Fides which stands for the Roman goddess of good faith and honesty. In latter Roman period, she was called Fides Publica (Public Faith) in whose temple important state documents (treaties) were kept for safe custody under her guardianship.

A farmer sows seed with the faith that it will fructify. Losing the seed, he gets much more grain. Faith always implies ignoring the lesser gain in favour of a greater one. Faith is power and anyone, who has faith, is powerful. In business and in family relationship, the most important thing is trust (Faith) in one another.

Stages of Belief:

1. Belief in a total worldly enjoyment for which one may amass material things by any means, fair or foul.
2. Belief in limited enjoyment for which one may amass material things in a limited quantity by legitimate means.
3. Belief in worldly enjoyment which is transitory and usually followed by pain resulting in the sense of detachment and wish to turn towards spirituality.
4. Belief in the existence of some power, which if connected, may lead to real happiness.
5. Belief in self-effort to gain contact with that power by reading or listening religious scriptures and start believing in rites and rituals of one of the religions or start believing in a doctrine or dogma or any of the religions and become an adherent, followers, devotee, supporter, upholder or any such creed in such a state. On having such a belief one nurses a doubt in his mind about its reality because such a belief has been acquired from others, is second-hand and not deep-rooted. To cover up or ignore the doubts, one tends to become a zealot (over-religious) and follows the dictum of ~~us~~ and them+ and becomes a fanatic. This results in hatred for other religions resulting in violence and bloodshed which has been witnessed in human history innumerable times.

Avtar says, unless man is blessed with the Divine Knowledge,

He does not fulfill the purpose of human life.

- Avtar Bani : 237

*Without knowledge, there can be no faith,
Without faith there can be no love,
Without love there can be no firm devotion,
As butter cannot be churned from water.*

- Ramcharitmanas

Stages of Faith:

1. The seed of faith (an inborn spiritual faculty in human beings) lying dormant sprouts on meeting a Spiritual Master.
2. The seed of faith germinates on attaining. Divine Knowledge by the grace of a Satguru.
3. Irrigated by the water of Simran (practice of remembering Nirankar . God) and the manure of Satsang (attending congregation of saints), the sprouted seed of faith grows into a plant.
4. On rendering Sewa (selfless service) to human beings, the plant of faith, nourished by it like air and sunshine, grows into a tree.
5. This tree of faith enduring the vagaries of Nature (ups and downs of life) and considering them as the Will of God, matures and comes to fruition.
6. Faith is the result of first-hand Knowledge of God (the source of real happiness . Bliss) by the grace of living Spiritual Master. The first-hand God-knowledge results in real faith. The hallmark of faith due to the God-knowledge is the feeling of love, universal brotherhood and oneness of all that exists. Faith means trusting God (Nirankar) that He has a better plan for our life than we have. It means surrendering one's will to the Will of Nirankar or swimming with and not against the current of faith in His justice and wisdom. In the event of any unfavorable circumstances or tragedy, the devotee has full faith that Nirankar/Satguru will do only whatever is good for his spiritual evolution and will do something to tide over the situation. He never prays to any other power for help.

*“What the caterpillar calls the end of the world,
the Master calls a butterfly.”*

- Richard Buch

7. Do not let any doubt enter your mind after attaining the Divine Knowledge that might linger on. Do not believe your ears after you have seen with your eyes. With faith in God and love in the heart, one becomes powerful enough to accomplish even the seeming impossible. Nobody can create doubt in anybody if the doubt is not already there. Others can only help to express/manifest it. Doubt arises when conviction is borrowed from the scriptures and tradition and is at the intellectual level, whereas faith arises after attaining the Divine Knowledge and exists at the spiritual level. Individuals, who after attaining Divine Knowledge, develop spiritual love for not only all human beings but also for the whole universe, are a blessing for all creation and are instrumental in establishing peace and harmony in the world as one family . Vasudhaiv Kutumbkam.

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The Anatomy of Faith

- **Dr. B.S. Cheema, Mohali**

Faith is a word which is expression of emotional attitudes and energy of human mind in varied dimensions and intensities. It is a peculiar state of live conscious mind and degree of its involvement in various shades of depth of mental experience. The words belief, confidence, loyalty, dedication, sincerity, fidelity and trust, all contribute to the meaning of faith.

To be more precise, Faith is an emotional linkage between a living human being to another entity, live or otherwise, considered high in reverence or power of any kind. However, the word faith generally implies belief of a person in God Lord Master, Word of God. Faith, in reality, is the energy of life and its living. As such faith is broadly classified into blind faith and enlightened faith of live conscious mind and degree of involvement in its various forms of experience.

Blind Faith is based on rituals and rites or figment of pure imagination without knowing the true nature of object on which it is laid. But still there is desire in the person to acquire certain powers by dint of his concentration and endurance. This subsequently turns to be an illusive and wishful conceptual mirage. The basis of this faith is negativity

which leads only to bondages, frustrations and sorrows. Ridhis and Sidhis (occult powers) in Indian Yoga could be quoted as examples. These are purely for personal purpose and generate a sense of ego and authorship. Such a faith is never for the welfare of society at large. On the other hand, Enlightened Faith is based on knowing the true nature of the object of worship as this exists in true nature and real sense. A practitioner analyses it, takes to logical inference, then compares and confirms with the previous knowledge in the scriptures. After knowing the real nature of Truth, the individual imbibes it and gets adsorbed into it. A person who evolves in such awareness is called a person of spirituality. As consequence, a faithful person (saint) develops a dependence on such existential Truth. As a student trusts his teacher, a disciple reposes his faith in the Lord Master and his revelation of truth about the creator of the whole universe. The full comprehension of this knowledge or revelation is beyond the capacity of any human being except by the blessing of the contemporary knower of Truth . Satguru. This faith is based on an existential entity. Thus there emanates positive attitude in every walk of life.

Genesis of Faith

The soul is the basis of human life and faith represents dynamics of soul-energy in a living person. Therefore, cognition, reception and response combination in the human mind initiates a pattern of mental acceptance. A specific mode of acceptance can evolve into faith. Some facilitatory inputs could include various scriptures which when read minutely and understood thoroughly convey to the inquisitive practitioner almost a first-hand experience of the past prophets. This is despite the fact that these holy personalities had appeared at different times and places and spoke different languages. The present practitioner has never personally met the past prophets, yet their observations and inferences are identical. However, this experience is purely personal and non-transferable.

Another important factor in the genesis of faith is the company of saints. This could be in the form of an informal give and take in an ambiance of mutual love and respect. Still more important is the formal congregation where nothing except spiritual experiences are shared. Both the forms of being with the saints are always beneficial for the slow and silent development of faith in the human mind. With the passage of time, the sustained inputs effected in this manner evolve into a comprehensive perception of the reality of faith. Such association of thoughts in interactions done in a congenial atmosphere creates a deep and indelible impression in the realm of faith.

Dynamics of Faith

Faith is an inner feeling pervading the total being of a person. It is the being and the mind centred at a single point. Therefore, energy is magnified and rendered potentially vibrant. It is in this context the Russian world thinker Leo Tolstoy described the faith as the force of life. So when faith controls mind, miracles happen. This is also the first principle in the Scientology (branch in study of mind) which says that through faith it is possible to know the mind, the spirit and the life. The dynamics of the enlightened and blind faiths are absolutely different. The blind faith is tethered to some of the material objects and is not sourced in Spirituality and God and does not lead to Salvation.

Enlightened faith is based on the mental acceptance of the contemporary Satguru. Here the knowledge of God works in its full form. This faith encompasses all the attributes of Divinity like love, compassion and mercy for all men and creation. All these qualities are moderated or augmented as per requirement by the Master, who is always with the practitioners through his word and personal association. It is through the faith energy waves that a devotee becomes one with the Guru and Nirankar. As a consequence the faithful gets divine armour around him and comes under the blissful care of the Satguru. Now this faith develops into an immunity against any unfavourable situation which afflicts body, mind and soul. The faithful remains calm and unperturbed. The Divine awareness in the mind of a devotee always keeps him on the righteous track. Even in the event of unforeseen natural calamities, the Satguru through cosmic presence and power, sustains him and provides sustenance in the present day world, which is full of hurry, scurry and worry. Those who have solid faith in the Satguru and accept the Will of God, never falter in determination because they repose their faith in the Lord Master. Therefore, a saint is never demoralized by the negative forces of the surrounding world. He fearlessly confronts the situations for the welfare of humanity and remains steadfast in his pursuit of the spiritual journey. The radiance of faith in his very presence and its translation into deeds, sprouts forth the forceful chain of emotions of love, equality, human brotherhood and oneness of cosmic vision. These are, of course, the blessings of the Almighty God. Such faithful saint is always ready to sacrifice his own comforts for the welfare of others. This divine faith is both beneficial and dynamic in the spread of the light of spirituality. In his grace the Satguru responds to the aspirations and requirements of the devotee by his cosmic presence and omniscience. The melody of emotion of faith is most benevolently augmented by the blessings of the Satguru, thus confirming the truth that, Faith begets Faith best in the realm of spirituality plus a bonus of Grace.

Benefits of Faith

Faith is the life of soul and power of the mind and a catalyst of emotions and it is condensed energy of emotion waves. It is on this basis that it is often said and heard that faith has immense potential and it works miracles. Just imagine when Nirankar, the repository of energies, is connected to a devotee by waves of faith energy, vibrations flow towards the devotee. The Lord Master instills into a devotee divine peace and calm. Faith is the wireless linkage between the devotee and Guru/Nirankar based on the energy waves of emotions called faith. Thus faith is both potential and kinetic power. This power is both weapon and energy. The faithful uses it very selectively in his daily life under the aura of Spirit. The devotee is very conscious in its proper application as he sincerely wants to live by the Word of his Guru. With such sincere endeavor a practitioner can rise to unimaginably high altitudes of spirituality.

Last but not the least, the reciprocity of faith can best be described by a small story. A Child is standing at a higher plinth and his father is at a lower level. The father tells his son to jump. The child at once jumps into arms of his father.

Do you get the message?

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The Seeds of Faith

- C.L. Gulati, Chandigarh

A person went to market to buy pepper. A fraudulent shopkeeper gave him papaya seeds which quite resembled pepper. The light-weight large packet created doubt in the mind of the customer. He opened the packet. Surprised at the similarity, he chewed a few seeds, and discovering the difference from the known taste, he picked up a row with the shopkeeper for playing fraud and betraying his faith.

This incident of our daily life experience, lays open before us that whenever there is anything connected with or required in life, we must intimately be acquainted with its known attributes and characteristics for an objective test to affirm our faith in its genuineness. When the attributes of a thing or personage are testified, it becomes all the more a valid reason in itself to pin faith in the same and accept it to serve our purpose. Faith does not work apart from intellect but gives soul to intellect; it gives power that mind can never measure. Faith and intellect are, therefore, like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the identification of truth and proves that faith

emerges superior to intellect and leads to hope and prosperity. **In fine, faith stands for affirmation of truth followed by acceptance of the truth affirmed. Without the first, faith is blind and without the second, it is meaningless.**

Faith in God

The apostles laboured hard, the martyrs died in torments, the scholars and the scientists proclaimed the beauties of higher life, the sociologists untiringly inculcated the sense of duties of good citizen, the philosophers pioneered sublime thoughts and all agreed that God is one and that man's first duty is to realize Him. **If a man loses faith in God, he loses faith in himself. It spells crisis of character resulting in chaos and violence in the society at large.** This very message is scientifically carried through the mainstream of spirituality based on the acceptable and acknowledged scriptures of the world. It brings out that man's primary aim is to realize God with the blessings of contemporary True Master.

The direct knowledge of God is called **Brahmgyan** which is not to be mixed up with any mantra or a sermon. The generally asked question, "*Can Formless God be seen?*", is a patent negation of all the scriptures and teachings of the True Masters who have said in no uncertain terms that God can be seen and human life is primarily meant for this purpose only. Seeing God face to face by the grace of Satguru, man clinches his faith and gives assent to this divine testimony.

While the beauty is called skin deep, this enlightened faith enters the bones and prompts the man, **Love the Lord, your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.** (St. Matthew 22:37). In times of difficulty, devotee with such a faith never says, **Hey God, I have a big problem.** Instead he says, **Hey problem, I have a big God.**

Faith in God being the central seed of all religion, actual knowledge and relationship with one God also wipes out the question of devastating religious conversions mostly lured by material considerations. Such conversions are seen sowing the seeds of religious terrorism, dividing the society on communal basis and breeding the culture of bomb blasts. The biggest disease is the shared ignorance and half knowledge about one another's religious faith, where God is claimed to be one but actually denied as the common factor. In the absence of actual realization, God is different for different person and different for the same person on different occasions. There is a very thin line or margin between theists and atheists. God is one and is required to be known as one by everyone. The knowledge of God imparted by Nirankari Baba Ji, when compared with respective scriptures, it is a discovery of Parmatma for Hindus, Allah for Muslims, God

for Christians and so on. With the almighty God face to face, they cut across fissures and layers inter-se and say with love, %We are all one+.

Faith in Satguru (True Master)

Satguru plays a pivotal role in the life of man. The singular objective factor identifying the Satguru (True Master) is the instantaneous direct introduction of man with the all-pervading God:-

*Poore Gur Ka Sun Updes,
Parbrahm Nikat Kar Pekh.*

- Adi Granth (295)

It is generally argued that just as all roads lead to Rome, all modes of worship lead to God. This comparison is very odd. Rome is a fixed place for which different roads can be followed to reach there. But God is not confined to any place. He is omnipresent and there hardly arises any question of adopting different ways or modes to reach Him and realize Him. For realization of God, there is one and only one method and that is by the grace of the True Master. He does not prescribe any rituals. Rather, he frees the disciple's mind from all bondages. No amount of individual effort or worship can help reveal God to any man. It is purely a matter of grace for the True Master that God-knowledge is bestowed and that this Divine Vision is perpetual:

“By grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourself. It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.”

Ephesians 2:8

As the Divine Truth is eternal so is the True Master (Satguru). He is the first citizen of the universe and blesses the seekers with Divine Knowledge, %Prophet is said to be the oldest and the newest on earth like the day and night which have followed each other down the ages, and are still ever new.+ - Atharva Veda 10:8:23.

When we see Gurus here, there and everywhere, making tall claims, it is undoubtedly an uphill task for the seeker to identify the True Master. In this connection it is relevant to mention that when any member of our family falls sick, our priority is essentially to have him cured completely. Our duty does not end in the mere formality of taking him to any doctor. With the definite purpose in mind, we continue consulting doctors, one after the other, till the patient is fully recovered and becomes normal. Likewise, man is expected to give top priority to seeking God-

knowledge, the real purpose of his life. Let him go to any Guru with the exact purpose of asking for God-knowledge and continue his specific search till he comes into contact with the True Master who imparts Divine Knowledge. As we see the Sun with its own rays only, similarly, we can identify the True Master only on the touchstone of God-knowledge imparted by him. Anyone who approaches him, perceives God in one sitting on asking:

“Ask and it shall be given. Seek and ye shall find. Know and it shall be opened unto you.”

St. Mathew 7:7

Historically speaking, the True Master has always been one and only one at a time in the world. The only distinctive feature to mark the True Master is that he reveals the omnipresent formless God. This enlightenment marks the seed of faith in Satguru. Thereafter, the devotee completely surrenders to the Satguru. Whatever he gets, he thanks Guru, whatever he needs, he prays to Guru. He is never swayed by his material achievements. At all times and under all circumstances, he is intimately connected with Guru as the be-all and the end-all of his life. Today, Nirankari Baba Ji proclaims, % a person has a strong urge for God-realization, he will find a True Master to bless him with God-knowledge.+ By imparting this knowledge he is striking a balance between materialism and spiritualism and combining the art of living with lasting inner peace.

Faith in Gursikhs (Devotees)

Faith of the devotees in the True Master is important indeed, but more important than that is earning faith of the True Master by the devotees. While imparting knowledge of all-pervading God is the distinctive mark of the True Master, accepting and implementing his Word, in letter and spirit, is the hall-mark of the devotees:

*Gursikhan Di Eho Nishani,
Bachan Guru Da Paalan Oh.
Hass Hass Ke Paye Bhaana Mannan,
Hukam Kade Na Taalan Oh.*

- Avtar Bani : 291

In this context the type of faith expected of the devotees and the proverbial result shown by the True Master can well be judged from the Seed-story given hereunder:

A business tycoon grew old and thought of choosing a faithful successor. He called all the young executives in his company and said, "I have decided to choose one of you for handling my business empire." He continued, "I am going to give each one of you a seed today, a very special seed. I want you to sow the seed, water it and come back here after three months, with what you grow from the seed I give you. I will then judge the next CEO."

One man, named Amar, like the others, received a seed. He went home and excitedly told his wife the story. She helped him get a pot, soil and compost and he sowed the seed. Daily he would water it and watch to see if it had grown. After two weeks, other executives began to talk about their seeds and the plants that were beginning to grow. Amar kept checking his seed, but nothing ever grew. He felt like a failure. Two months went by. Everyone else had good plants, but Amar had nothing. He did not say anything to his colleagues. He kept on watering and wanted the seed to grow.

Finally, after three months, all the executives brought their plants to the Master for inspection. Amar told his wife that he was not going to take an empty pot. But she inspired him to be honest about what had happened. It was the most embarrassing moment of his life, but he felt his wife was right. He took his empty pot to the board room. He was amazed at the variety of plants grown by other executives. Amar put his empty pot on the floor. Many of his colleagues laughed and felt sorry for him.

When the Master arrived, he surveyed the room and greeted his young executives. Amar tried to hide himself in the back. All of a sudden, the Master spotted Amar with his empty pot. He was asked to come to the front. Amar was terrified at his failure. The Master asked him what had happened to his seed. Amar told him the story. The Master asked everyone to sit down except him. He looked at Amar and announced to the other executives, "Here is your next Chief Executive! His name is Amar."

Amar could not believe it. "He could not even grow the seed. How could he be the new CEO?" the others asked. Then the Master said, "Three months ago, I gave each one of you a seed. I told you to take the seed, sow it, water it and bring it back to me. But I gave you all boiled seeds; they were dead; it was not possible for them to grow. All of you, except Amar, have brought me plants and flowers. Obviously, when you found that the seed could not grow, you very cleverly played a mischief. Trying to win my pleasure you have instead betrayed my faith. You substituted another seed for the one I gave you. Amar was the only one with the courage and honesty to bring me a pot with my seed in it. He has thus earned my faith. Therefore, Amar is the one who will be the new Chief Executive," he asserted.

The durability of any edifice, however, magnificent at the top, depends on its foundation. When the latter crumbles, the citadel falls down. Faith is the foundation of a progressive and peaceful society. When we say, %Faith moves the mountains+it simply means that with mutual faith, we can resolve and remove the problems as big and invincible as the mountains.

The aforesaid self-speaking Seed-story highlights that faith once shaken cannot be easily restored and puts the victims in an irretrievable loss. On the other hand, practicing, in letter and spirit, Guru's Word means gaining the world. Earning faith of the Satguru, the Gursikh, in turn, is blessed with triple faith that man needs today, Faith in God, Faith in Self, and Faith in the World around us. This omnibus faith broadens the horizon of man like the vastness of God and it provides base for smooth life full of mutual love and affection with a heritage of Satyam, Shivam, Sundram marking millennium on earth.

* * *

THE FAITH AND THE TRUTH

- Kirpa Sagar, Faridabad

Love and faith constitute the fundamental ingredients of devotion. Our devotion to God is meaningless if it is bereft of love and faith.

Before we proceed, let us note that love and faith can be fostered only after we know the one whom we are dedicating ourselves. Without knowing the beloved one, love is a mere dream and faith a hollow belief, an act of mere superstition based on convention, tradition and imitation retained by habit.

The faith must be based on Truth. And Truth does not admit of plurality. It implies that we have exhausted all other concepts, options and alternatives. We may love many, but faith can be reposed only in one. Here, all our arguments find their end. Not to speak of complaints, the very reasoning stops and we need not come back again.

The concept of true faith presumes that our submission is complete, total and final. We surrender to the will of the One whom we revere. No doubt, we pray for what we wish to have, but our faith does not permit us to go beyond that. We feel grateful to the Supreme Giver if He is benevolent to bestow, but utter no word of despair if the prayer is not answered. If at all, we blame ourselves. We feel convinced that we wish to get something without realizing that its possession may give us trouble instead of

happiness, while the Supreme Benevolent knows it. So, we remain contented all the time, in all circumstances.

Here, neither Kabir has any grouse against his poverty, nor Raja Janak is proud of his royal possessions. Both find themselves equally blissful because they are contented with whatever their Beloved One has bestowed. This is the mark of their true faith in Him.

No Vacillation

True faith means the end of vacillation. In fact, this is the stage where we have no choice. There is no second object to opt for. There is no second place to go, no second door to knock at. As a matter of fact, a true devotee would wish to repeat what the Sufi Saint Farid said once:

“O God, don't compel me to sit at the doorstep of someone else than Thee; if that be so, better relieve me of this human body . I would prefer to die.”

When we seek to worship different deities, visit different places of pilgrimage or repose our faith in holy scriptures, we must go a little beyond and we will realize that we are worshipping only the One God manifested and praised in the same. It is a clear example of unity in diversity. Our faith, however, will remain an act of superstition, if we tend to show faith in an object without knowing the One manifested in it or pervading it. It will help us little to repeat the name or sing the praise without knowing the One it seeks to address.

The Mission

It is here that the Sant Nirankari Mission, a spiritual movement, currently led by His Holiness Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj, seeks to intervene. It does not dispute or condemn any mode of worship or religious practice. Even the object or place of worship here creates no problem. The Mission only counsels the devotee to first know the One he or she seeks to praise, please, adore and worship. Once this is done, no act of any religious faith remains meaningless. Since the Ultimate Truth is realized and made a part of our faith, every mode of worship and religious practice gains logic.

Here, those who wish to avoid religious practices can also do so. For they are already united with God they sought to reach through various practices, rites and rituals. In fact, they are no longer stuck up with the images or forms. They perceive beyond the same

and perceive the Formless . the all-pervading, omnipresent. Once they find themselves at the *destination*, they are no longer required to search for a path or follow one.

The only practice the Sant Nirankari Mission suggests is the congregation of saints. This strengthens their faith based on the realization of Ultimate Truth. Delusions, if any, get removed. The congregation further promotes the spirit of selfless service to others, particularly the fellow-saints. It is said here:

There is no greater religion than to realize the Omnipresent God and no greater act than to serve the saints.+

* * *

FAITH AND INQUIRY

- Lt. Gen. A.S. Bullar (Retd), Gurgaon

Faith is very much part of human behavior. So is the property of inquiry by a human. How each of them plays a part in human behaviours is the subject matter of this article. Let us take faith first. Faith can be wrongly used as well as misused. By nature, the Eastern people are having more faith and the Western nations predominate in inquiry and logic. Examples are many and varied in the wrong use of faith.

For example, there is a misconception routinely preached and propagated that a visit to a particular place of worship brings you much benefit and perhaps fulfillment of your desires. This can also be said of a certain person, religion and practice. Whereas the basic truth is the fact of the prevalence of the Divinity at all places and at all times.

There are very many examples of good use of faith. The most famous example is of Gopis (female devotees of Lord Krishna) of Varindaban. They were approached by Uddhava, a preacher, who advised them to concentrate only on the Creator of all creation. Their reply was a matter of faith in their Shyam Sunder (Lord Krishna) which no other type of teaching or no other teacher could replace. Similar is the case of Meerabai who surrendered herself to her Girdhar Gopal (Lord Krishna). The love of Bhilni for Lord Rama is also well-known. The love of Mary Magdalene for Lord Jesus falls in the same category. Similar is the case of Hazart Ali for his devotion to Prophet Mohammad. Many such examples are there for the correct and redeeming nature of faith. So, what we see is that faith by itself is neither good nor bad. The choice lies entirely with the person reposing the faith rightly or wrongly.

We also have the cases of blind faith in certain ceremonies and rituals. A special havanq(sacred fire), a special mass or a special prayer meeting is all that is considered as just and sufficient cause for a given situation. The ceremonial and a ritual do have a space and meaning in the human scheme of things if the real purpose behind such a ceremony/ritual is understood and grasped.

No discussion can be complete unless you mention and take into account the Guru-System into account. This is mostly an Eastern and particularly Indian tradition. What is demanded of a devotee is to shed the human tendency for logic, reasoning and perhaps questioning and doubting. What is demanded of a devotee is the full surrender to the direction and guidance of the Guru, Satguru, Lord Master or Murshid. Such a system or direction does lend itself no misuse or wrong usage. It is up to a discerning devotee to be very careful in selecting his/her Guru, Guide or Mentor. One can only quote the example of artificial flowers. Their value lies in the fact that a real entity does exist somewhere.

The other common human trait is the questioning and questioning tendency of a human being. The usual query is preceded by what, why, when, where and how. Sometimes if this, then what? The basic fact remains that almost anything, any incident and any happening may be questioned. There is one other factor which is entering here, which pertains to the mental make-up of a human being. The question could be based on some preconceived notion involved which could be in the person asking the question or this attitude could be on the part of the ultimate listener, who is to examine the explanation offered. So we do come across a situation of a question which may be redundant and the wrong reason for raising a question. There is no doubt that one valid reason for human progress is the questioning and enquiring mind but one must also remember the deficiency in the procedure and know the illogical and self-aggrandizing type of questions.

Summarizing, we may state that the either extreme position is wrong and un-fruitful. One takes us to the alley of blind faith and having to accept a wrong and perhaps retarding stand. The other extreme is the taking a stand of rigidity and denying all new and beneficial things. The correct answer is perhaps lying in between these two extremes. This mean, acceptable and logical point would be difficult to know and enunciate. It is, however, this type of reasoning and thinking which leads us towards the belief and surrender to the Guru-System and, of course, the belief in the intervention of the divine being. Luckily, the Nirankari devotees have the Nirankari Baba to look up to, in all matters of spiritual guidance and clarifications on all wrong notions a human is likely to have.

* * *

FAITH

- Col. C.S. Toor (Retd), Chandigarh

Faith is belief in the trustworthiness of an idea. In formal usage the word Faith is usually reserved for the concept of religion, which centres on a belief in God where it almost universally refers to a trusting belief in a transcendental reality or a Supreme Being.

According to the dictionary, faith is an attitude, conviction and conduct based on a right relationship and confidence with God.

Faith cannot be imaginary but has to be based on facts. People believe in an imaginary God and as such their faith is imaginary. Until and unless one sees and recognizes God and matches it with the descriptions given in the scriptures, one cannot have faith in Him. Today the whole world accepts the omnipresence of God but worships Him as a distant entity and addresses Him by pointing a finger towards the sky. One can well imagine how a distant entity can be omnipresent. This is their perception of God and as such how one can have faith in something which has not been seen or perceived? Nirankari Baba Ji has repeatedly quoted: %Khuda Who Hargiz Khuda Nahi Hai, Jo Udhar To Hai Par Idhar Nahi Hai.+ That means, God can never be called God if He is there but not here.

I am from a Sikh family. My parents had complete faith in the Sikh traditions. In Pakistan we had a room on the first storey of the house exclusively for Sri Guru Granth Sahib. The whole month my parents did a reading of the Holy Granth and on the first date of every Indian month . Sankranti . considered an auspicious day in the Sikh religion . invited the villagers to celebrate the day. After partition of the country, my father never went to his school where he was appointed as Head Master till he had completed reading Sukhmani Sahib and my mother did not speak a word till she had done the recitation of the five Banis (writing of different Gurus). According, all members of the family had developed their faith.

My elder sisters Mrs Gurdip Cheema from Chandigarh and Mrs Rajwant Bhullar from Shimla had attained God-knowledge from the then Nirankari Baba Ji. When I heard this, I used to scoff at them because they had broken the family tradition. However, on January 9, 1957, when I had gone to Chandigarh for some work, I visited the house of my brother-in-law, Rev D.S. Cheema, husband of Mrs Gurdip Cheema in the evening and saw a Nirankari Satsang (holy congregation) being held there. It was presided over by late Rev Babu Mahadev Singh Ji. At first I frowned and expressed my displeasure at it but when I heard the complete proceedings, I was amazed and impressed to hear the sweet language and harmonious relationship which they shared with each other. On January 10th, I attended another congregation at Rev D.S. Shauq Sahib's house and

requested Rev Babu Mahadev Singh Ji for Gyan (God-knowledge). The moment I was initiated with the God-knowledge, I felt surprised. It was so simple and it completely matched with the descriptions given in the Holy Granth Sahib. I had not an iota of doubt in my mind about the authenticity of the God-knowledge. My imaginary faith had now got converted into a reality.

When I told this episode to my parents, they laughed it away, thinking that I too had got carried away like their daughters. Anyhow, in 1959, when I got admission in the local college at Fatehgarh Sahib, I started Sangat in the house at Bassi Pathanan with the help of sister Harbans Kaur Ji who was also a Nirankari. In the same year, I requested Baba Avtar Singh Ji at Patiala to visit Bassi Pathanan. He consulted Bhai Sahib Amar Singh Ji and acceded to my request. He came sometime in October/November along with other devotees of the Mission. Everybody stayed for the night. By this congregation my parents too were impressed and attained the Enlightenment. Their illusions were dispelled when they realized God. Hence it is now quite evident that the faith has to be based on experience.

I would like to quote another episode from my army career and I am sure it would definitely motivate my near and dear ones to have the same realization which helped me throughout. I got Emergency Commission in the army as an officer in 1964. I was posted at Mizoram which was a disturbed area and under the army. In 1968, I got a message that I had to go for an interview for Permanent Commission to Bangalore within a week. I had hardly any time to reach there on time. The weather was bad but with the blessings of Baba Ji reached Bangalore a day prior to my interview.

I had got no time for preparation. But I was not worried due to my firm faith that whatever would happen would be for my betterment. The readers should be surprised to note that after reaching Bangalore I saw an army vehicle at the railway station. On enquiry I came to know that the vehicle belonged to a unit where my friend had been recently posted. He was on local leave. I took a lift and reached my friend Capt. Bajwa's house. He was elated to see me. I told him what I had come there for. He said, "Don't worry, go and have a wash." He told me not to worry as I had come to the right place. After dinner we went for a stroll. He later took me to Capt. Brar's house and introduced me as his buddy and also apprised him about my visit. Capt. Brar gave me a diary which had questions with the answers given. He asked me go through them carefully. An army Interview lasts for four days: the first two days are for written tests and the other two are for physical and command task. I was surprised to find that all those questions appeared in the papers. I was good at the physical and command tests but was a little under confident of making an extempore speech in English. The Group Testing Officer gave four topics and five minutes preparation time. I came back after a minute and told him that I was ready. One of the topics was: what is happiness and how can it be attained. I started by saying that happiness was of two types: eternal or

spiritual and material or temporary. I had hardly spoken for two minutes when I was told to sit down. Later the Group Testing Officer passed a remark saying that if any one officer from his group was to be selected it would be me. ~~N~~None of the tasks of a devotee can remain unaccomplished if he seeks the shelter of the True Master.+

- Avtar Bani: 264

If we have total faith in our Master, no problem can worry us because our body, mind and material assets belong to him, and he will look after us provided we stand by our commitment to the First Pledge. We should not tell our Master, how big the problem is rather let the problem know how big our Master is. To conclude, I humbly pray to His Holiness Baba Ji to bless me with noble thoughts, pure intentions and sufficient strength so that I can channel all my energy in the right direction and have an unwavering Faith in him and the Mission.

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FOUNDATION OF FAITH

- Amrik Singh, I.A.S., (Retd), Delhi

Faith and belief are synonyms, which means complete trust and confidence. The faithful are the true believers in a particular religion.

Faith has direct relevance to God and the True Master, who can reveal God. Most people have faith in God without actually knowing God. Some visualize God as the creator of the world. They have blind faith in God as they worship God without knowing Him.

“You worship what you know not, we know what we worship; God is a spirit and they who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth”. (Bible)

So, their worship is confined to the recitation of the holy scriptures, performance of rites and rituals. They seem to be contented with adoration and glorification of the unknown God. They worship and glorify the man-made images of God, the replicas of their deities, make offerings and sacrifices, donations and perform various acts of charity, so on and so forth. Hence, their faith in God is misconceived and they are not redeemed.

True faith develops only after attaining God-knowledge and this is based on firm foundation of faith in God (Truth). Such a faith is as strong as a rock, unflinching and lasts for ever and ever. Just as a house cannot be constructed on the foundations of sand, faith in God cannot be firm unless one attains God-knowledge through a True Master and has firm faith in him.

God-knowledge without practice is futile. Hence it must be practiced in daily life.

A True Master or Satguru is the mediator between God and man, who reveals God to a seeker at mere asking. This distinguishes him from the self-styled Gurus. The one, who is himself ignorant, cannot lead others to the Destination.

It is imperative for every human being to know God, the Creator of the universe and Supreme Father of all living beings, and then to repose firm faith in Him up to the last. This faith stays with man as his asset and it leads to peace, prosperity, bliss and salvation of the soul, the prime aim of human life. Any person can attain this God-knowledge from the True Master at mere asking. To attain the ultimate in faith, one must attain Brahm Gyan or God-knowledge and then keep on practicing the basic cardinal commandments of the True Master:

1. Remembering the omnipresent formless God in every breath. (Simran)
2. Regularly attending the congregation of saints. (Satsang)
3. Rendering selfless service to the people, with body, mind and wealth. (Sewa)

Jesus, the Lord Master, gave his disciples this clarion call:

Come to me, believe in me, follow me.
I am the way, and the truth and the life.
Your sins are forgiven. Your faith has saved you, go in peace.

(Bible)

Whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. (Bible)

One who reposes complete faith in God and the True Master receives the unique gift of Divine Knowledge. (Adi Granth)

Both forgiveness of sins and eternal life are offered in the gospel Truth and are received by faith.

(Bible)

* * *

FAITH AND INTELLIGENCE

- Prof. G.S. Popli, Delhi

Sensitive and informed minds believe that the fundamental need of the world at present is the regeneration of spiritual faith. If we believe in universal spiritual values, peace and understandings will grow. Human societies like human beings live by faith and die when faith disappears. If our society is to recover its health, it must regain its faith. We need a faith which will assert the power of spirit over things and find significance in a world in which science and organizations seem to have lost their relationship to traditional values. There is an urgent need to revive this faith. Swami Vivekananda once remarked: %f my mind can believe it, my heart can receive it, my hands can do for it, yes, I know, I am going to achieve it.+

A great philosopher Goethe remarks: %The one and only real and preformed theme of the world and of human history . a theme to which all others are subordinate . remains the conflict between belief and un-belief. All epochs dominated by belief in whatever shape have a radiance and bliss of their own and bear fruit for their people as well as for posterity. All epochs over which un-belief in whatever form maintains its miserable victory, even if they boast and shine for a value with false splendor, are ignored by posterity because nobody likes to drudge his life out over sterile things.+

It is easy to acquire intelligence. But the emotions arise from the heart. The peak of emotions is faith. Our thoughts have great power. If we believe in something, we must believe it with full might. Our faith has power. Here is one excellent example from the book *Yug Purush* by which the difference between belief and behaviour can be understood. Once Shahenshah Baba Avtar Singh Ji had a chance to walk through the main bazaar of Lahore (Pakistan) along with Baba Buta Singh Ji. There, Baba Buta Singh Ji saw a signboard depicting the name of a famous Astrologer. Baba Buta Singh Ji advised Shahenshah Ji to follow him. The astrologer was surprised to see them and immediately stood up from his seat in their honour. He kept on watching the face of Baba Buta Singh Ji for something and then turned to Shahenshah Ji to proclaim that

Your companion is a great saint. He has all the divine powers at his command. You are very lucky to have his company.+ Shahenshah Ji was very pleased to hear these words of praise. His hands went to his pocket for picking some money but Baba Buta Singh Ji stopped him and led him down to the stairs. The astrologer was very surprised and annoyed to see all this happening. Shahenshah Ji was also surprised, when Baba Buta Singh Ji told him, You are very innocent, my dear, but the astrologer is a very greedy person. He is doing all this with some ulterior motive. He is wrong even after being right. Had he some belief in his statements, he would have immediately bowed down at our feet. He should have asked for that precious gift, which he is proclaiming. By not doing so, he himself has betrayed his true identity. One must learn to believe in what one is advocating. Action must follow the words to have the desired effect.+

In his book, Recovery of Faith, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, a great scholar, a learned teacher and the Ex-President of India, writes, No live without faith is impossible. If nature has horror of a vacuum, the human soul has fear of emptiness. One must believe, no matter what the situation is. The spiritual homelessness of modern man can't last long. To belong to nowhere, to be incapable of committing oneself is to be isolated. It is not ease but a personal burden. We must win back our post security.+

A Noble Laureate and a great philosopher, Rabindranath Tagore says, Faith is like the bird that feel the light when the dawn is still dark.+ Finally, a few lines of a beautiful song from Bridge Over Trouble Water+are reproduced, by which the author has tried to show the miracles of faith in our day-to-day life:

*When you're weary, feeling small,
When tears are in your eyes, I will dry them all.
I am on your side, Oh! When times are rough,
And friends just can't be found.
Like a bridge over troubled water,
I will lay me down.*

* * *

FAITH TESTIFIES DEVOTION

- **Narpal Singh, Chandigarh**

Faith, a word of five letters, very easy to pronounce but a bit difficult to adopt in one's life. Different situations in our day-to-day life lead to perceptions, and with the passage of time, perceptions get transmuted into beliefs and beliefs into Faith.

A human being comes into this world with certain relations e.g. Father-son, mother-son, father-daughter, mother-daughter, brother-brother, brother-sister and so on. The basis of these relations is purely blood relations. Besides, while living in this world, a human being develops and maintains certain relations the basis of which is not blood relation rather, an emotional linkage between the two which is known as Faith. The examples of such relations are husband-wife, friend-friend, doctor-patient, teacher-student and so on.

If we closely analyze both kinds of the above relations, we would realize that the element of emotional linkage is must even to keep the blood relations intact, because if this linkage gets missed, the relationship withers. Therefore, between two human beings, the emotional linkage Faith is must for maintaining any relation. For example, a patient goes to a doctor with the Faith that with his/her capabilities, he/she would diagnose his problem and give best treatment. Simultaneously, the attending doctor has a faith in the patient that he/she would take all suggested precautions and take medicines according to his/her advice. For a moment, if either of them breaches the Faith, the relationship between them shatters. Therefore, %Stronger the faith, stronger is the relation.+

Likewise, in spirituality, devotion (Bhakti) is the relation between the Lord Master (Satguru) and the devotee which is also based on mutual Faith. Stronger the faith, stronger the relation between the Lord Master and the devotee. A Satguru, an incarnation of Almighty God in human form with divine wisdom, remains present in each age and time and because of his divine wisdom, the Lord Master (Satguru) instills faith in every human being who comes in his shelter as he blesses everybody with Divine Knowledge (Brahm Gyan) without going into his/her merits and demerits. He does so because this is the mark of a Satguru, as it is scripted in Gurbani:

The mark of a True Master is that he reveals God proximate. Listen to the True Master and perceive God proximate.

Baba Avtar Sing Ji Maharaj in Avtar Bani also says:

The True Master can fulfill an aspirant's wish in no time and dispel one's ignorance by the Divine Light.

Now, on the other hand, to be blessed, the devotee has to have full Faith in his Lord Master that he is the human form of the Almighty. As he is the doer of everything in the universe, he knows everything in my heart and mind. Further, the Divine Knowledge bestowed by the Lord Master (Satguru) is the same that was bestowed by the Great Masters of the past. As the Almighty and the Lord Master are the supreme power, one

has to surrender to him: This message, Baba Avtar Singh Ji Maharaj has scripted in the last two lines of Shabad No.277 in Avtar Bani as under:

*The one who surrenders to God
and reposes faith in the True Master is ever blissful
and dwells in the heaven.*

In the above lines Baba Avtar Singh Ji has laid emphasis on two things: to accept every situation as the will of God Almighty and repose Faith in the Lord Master.

Our Lord Master always comes forward to our help/rescue provided we have full Faith in him. If our Faith is wavering, his help is also not sure.

When we have the will to accept every situation realizing that this is created by my Lord Master who knows my betterment better than me, our Faith gets strengthened. Every day in Satsang (holy congregation) in Dhuni (prayer), we recite ~~Mer~~ Mera Dole Na Aitbar+ (May my Faith no waver) but we have to pray this from the core of our heart.

Once I had heard a learned saint stating that our Devotion (Bhakti) begins and ends with Faith (Vishwas) which is absolutely true. Therefore, let us all surrender to our Lord Master having full Faith in him and that will testify our devotion.

* * *

DO WE HAVE FAITH IN GOD

- **Mrs. Kiran Behl, Lecturer, Gurgaon**

A person who has an unwavering faith in God doesn't look any different from ordinary folks. But spend a few moments in conversation with him, and we notice how distinct, how unique he is as compared to those living at ordinary level of faith . now strong, now weak. With ups and downs in life, the one who has developed an undaunted faith in God, lives in harmony with the whole universe. Perceiving God in every being, he remains on the right path, doing the righteous. He does not get pessimistic even in the worst kind of circumstances. His staunch faith tells him that everything that shows up in his life is there because God intended it there. So, he is always in a state of gratitude, feeling thankful for everything, even if there might seem to be hurdles and obstacles. In his heart of hearts he knows that there must be existing somewhere an opportunity

conducive to his spiritual growth. Having staunch faith, reverence and gratitude, he honours all opportunities and remains open to them . flexible and adjusting. It is unlikely to hear him complain about anything. He is never a fault-finder and stays tuned to his Original Source i.e. God (Nirankar) with the unseen but strong thread of faith. The positive energy that extends itself from him has a tremendous healing impact on those around him.

Now let us take a few minutes off to ponder over whether or not we have faith in God. For this we will have to examine our thoughts, our energy level and our relationships. For example, if I concentrate more on what is missing in my life instead of the innumerable blessings that I have, the bliss that is brought by faith will elude me.

Every negative thought will weaken us and diminish our faith in God and every positive thought will fill our life with energy and happiness.

Negative Thinking

1. I don't have enough money for my future requirements.
2. I don't have enough vitality and energy to attend holy congregations and render service. I am not an attractive personality.
3. My children don't show me any respect. They will not take care of me when I grow old.
4. I can't please people. They all bring me down. I feel so unappreciated that it makes me cry. No one helps me.
5. I have always been this way. It is my nature. I cannot help being angry or upset over the things I do not like.

Positive Thinking

1. God will provide me with everything I genuinely need.
2. I am part of the limitless source of all energies. I am what I had to be. I am grateful to God, my Maker.
3. I will teach my children to respect all life by doing the same myself. God will take care of me.
4. I am leading a purposeful life. I will listen to my inner voice and act accordingly. God will give me the strength and help I need.
5. I am a divine and pious soul. I can change my thought pattern and lead a more meaningful life.

When we connect, listen to, and follow our heart and soul, it becomes possible to link and blend with the Divine Source, Nirankar, to be reminded of our own Divinity. Application of God-knowledge can work wonders to bring peace and harmony and to instill positive thinking and hope into a sad heart. Negative emotions of anger, fear of failure and criticism (of self and others) begin to get released and divine qualities such as kindness, compassion, forgiveness and love start flowing in our heart. If we remain persistent, the Energy permeates throughout our body, spreading into every muscle, fiber, nerve and cell. The outcome can be nothing but the much needed constructive outlook and better relationship with our own self, life-partner, family, friends, neighbours, colleagues, co-workers, the whole society and then the universe. All relationships are the part of our learning and growing process leading to the enlightenment of the soul, a deeper insight and an even stronger connection with God.

Our vulnerabilities and insecurities, our pathetic need to get attention, approval and acceptance, begin to disappear gradually. We begin to feel love, healings-power and joy. God-realization enables us to make a soul-to-soul connection with all, to see the real behind his or her physical form and feel the good that is inside all of us. The question is: Do we want to look into the mirror and be open-minded to what we need to learn to lead a blissful life or simply pass by the mirror by pretending it is not there? Let us not shrug our shoulders sending a message who cares? We must have faith that God cares!

* * *

THE PATH OF FAITH

- A.P. Anand, Mumbai

The topic of faith often crops up between atheists and theists with heated discussions. There is nothing strange in it as we are passing through a dark era of life. A leading newspaper The Time of India had published a stunning news item on June 15, 2008, that intelligent people are less likely to believe in God. It was more surprising to read that over the last century the decline in religious observance was directly linked to rise in average intelligence. What a pity! In the parlance of spirituality it is said that vision is the art of seeing and realizing which is possible by Lord's grace and true wisdom dawns when all unworthy thoughts are decimated. God is omnipresent in every speck or say that He is assimilated in His creation. He is Maya (illusion) and a Designer and Creator infinite of everything in this world. What someone has rightly said about success applies to faith also. Success is not the result of spontaneous combustion. You must first set yourself on fire of spirituality in this case. Faith means confidence and loyalty. A blind faith is not desired even in the preceptor to be before initiation.

Faith is a fundamental base of all religions as it fosters realization and presence of God and helps in ridding sin. Also faith in self is a fundamental requirement for success in every field. Love and faith can also be described as void of death, distrust and vengeance.

Faith does not require any prop to stand on but only to subjugate and direct uncontrolled senses to lead a virtuous and propriety life, to achieve faith and higher ideals and no drifting of mind later on, otherwise these very senses will have corrupting influence in our life. In sheer faith, we completely surrender ourselves to the surgeon to remove our malignant part of the body for healing, then why the doubts arise to surrender to the Almighty Creator and Destroyer? Even the gods, saints and sages are seen meditating and contemplating upon the Supreme Power. Someone has truly said, %With God you can sail over the high seas but without God you cannot even cross over the threshold.+ With firm faith in God, True Master, teacher, elders and a little extra care to lead a virtuous and happy life, we can reduce the impact of life's onslaughts due to our past evil deeds. It was an exhorting and enlightening discourse / sermon and outpourings of Lord Krishna to Arjuna in the battlefield about the lesson of eternal life and faith in himself and casting off attachment towards his enemy which enabled him to win the war of righteousness with judicious decisions.

Faith is divine, inculcates love, has healing power and results in bliss. It makes us strong and builds up confidence. The world is sustained due to love and faith and faith in God acts as an anchor and refuge in our life. Faith and buoyant mind enhance our will-power and empower and boost our morale to accomplish even intricate and difficult jobs. With love, faith and sweet words we can become cynosure of all and receive their favours and blessings. Patience, faith and diligence move mountains. There is complete harmony and understanding in family life only when there is love, faith and sharing. Faith is light. In love and faith we shed hatred, violence, ego and jealousy. When confidence and love override, even the turbulent minds subside and the foes turn friends. Faith takes us forward, whereas ego drowns us completely. Our success in encountering the vicissitudes, turns and twists of life, reveals our resolve and the strength of our faith. With faith and surrender to Higher Power, no grief, affliction and sorrows, etc. will come near you. When you have complete and sincere faith in God. He will Himself come to you dashing for your help, in some form, in the hour of need (like Lord Narsimha appeared to Prahlad in half-lion, and half-human form), as He is called %Khuda+ (In Urdu, meaning coming at His own will). His ways and paths are different and difficult to understand with common sense.

We should not forget that Sri Rama gave Hanuman his insignia of finger-ring in trust only to produce it to Sita to show his faith and closeness to the Lord. Also the

inscription of the words "Hail Sri Rama" (Hail Sri Rama) by Sri Rama's monkey army on the stones in pure faith, the stones started floating on the surface of sea which helped Sri Rama and his army to cross over to Sri Lanka to wage a war with Ravana to rescue Sita from his clutches.

Spirituality is purely a path of faith without which it is bankrupt. Faith combined with love (based on untainted affection and pious relationship) and prayers take you to heaven but lust takes you to the lowest ebb of life. The believers chant Lord's Name at the dawn without fail for His grace and forgiveness and become pious. These attributes better our lives. We can take even our next breath only in hope and faith. Accumulation of worldly wealth is ephemeral in false hope and faith of our future life which is uncertain. Mahatma Gandhi said, "Where there is love and faith, there is life." The tragedy with us is that we instill faith in God after a long wait to begin it and remain entangled in our follies. Our connections are broken. The real connection is of love and complete absorption in Him. This way we inculcate devotion towards the Lord to attain salvation and His generousness. With showers of His love and grace on us our attitude towards life changes from negative to positive, resulting in bliss all around but before it, it is of paramount importance to chart and tread the straight and sacrosanct path shown by the Lord and the Preceptor. Faith and love create internal peace which is a holy and eternal spring within us. Someone has to awaken and invoke our dormant qualities through discourses and that someone is none other than the True Master who is able to transform our life. He is the enlightened soul to remove our corrupt thoughts to bring us near to God. When we are successful after passing through all the difficult tests, the Lord will take us along to His own abode and redeem us.

Nowadays people have belief in the destruction of mankind to meet their own parochial ends or to wash their dirty linen in public through exploding atomic and hydrogen bombs or with some other devilish acts in spite of denunciation and outcry of the people. They fail to recognize that Divine Forces have upper hand and they work contrary to such nasty thoughts. God is the Supreme and Final Judge. Saint Augustine rightly said, "Faith is to believe in what we do not see, and the reward of this faith is to see what we believe." Sometimes we do not get favourable results of our supplication. We should accept God's verdict/dispensation as it may be having some better hidden agenda for us at some other occasion at a split second. We should have patience for His deliverance. So, if you intend to imbibe faith in God or someone else, it is prerequisite to fill your kitty with single-minded love and resolve.

This world requires a few roving dedicated harbingers of Lord Supreme, to spread the message of faith and love on this earth by igniting the spark of peace and mercy and

unite the strayed souls to know the real purpose of life. The Nirankari Mission is accomplishing this noble mission.

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FIRM FAITH

- **Mrs. Krishna Samtani, Mumbai**

There is no one who does not love himself, has no belief in himself and has no ambition to rise higher and higher. To fulfill such ambitions, one should have strength to cultivate firm faith in oneself. What is faith? It is a complete trust or confidence in what we think and do. But alas! The man of faith knows how to be faithful but fails to realize the object of faith. Only Arjuna was successful in the test of archery conducted by his teacher Dronacharya, whereas his brothers failed. This is because Arjuna was very clear about the object to be shot at (an eye of the bird), whereas his brother saw everything else but not the object.

In Bhagavad Gita (17:2, 3), Lord Krishna tells Arjuna:

'That untutored innate faith of men is of three kinds – Sattvika, Rajasika and Tamasika. Hear of it from Me.'

'The faith of all men conforms to their mental constitution, Arjuna. Faith constitutes a man, whatever the nature of his faith he is verily that.'

Men of Tamasika disposition worship the spirits of the dead and group of ghosts. The actions resulting from Tamasika faith lack piety and self-control, are uncultured, arrogant, deceitful, inclined to rob others of their livelihood, slothful, down-hearted and procrastinating.

Men of Rajasika faith worship demigods and demons. In this faith, the doer is full of attachment, seeks the fruit of actions and is greedy, oppressive by nature and of impure conduct and is affected by joy and sorrow.

Men of Sattvika disposition worship gods. The actions of Sattvika faith are free from attachment, unegotistic, endowed with firmness and vigour and unswayed by success and failure:

“The Sattva, Rajas and Tamas – these three qualities born of nature tie down the imperishable soul to the body, Arjuna.”

- Bhagavad Gita (14:5)

Tamasik nature binds the soul through error, sloth and sleep. Rajasik nature binds it through attachment to actions and their fruit, whereas Sattvik nature binds it through identification with joy and wisdom.

Often people fail to realize the correct object of faith, that is, the Creator who is imperishable. Instead, they develop blind faith in the objects of creation and start worshipping them as God. The soul, having failed to identify itself with its True Self (Creator), thus remains bound to the body. As such, it experiences everything attached to the body - the joy, sorrow, pain, pleasure, praise and condemnation in accordance with the Law of Karma (Cause and Effect).

Although one praises and enjoys the beauty of the flowers in a garden but due credit has to be given to the gardener for maintaining the garden. Likewise, we should have firm faith in the Creator (God) and not his creations. Sans the Creator, there cannot be any creation.

Today Nirankari Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj is illuminating the extinguished souls by reuniting them with the true Self. Just as a glowing bulb dispels the darkness of a room, so also Baba Ji through God-realization helps us to perceive the real object of faith - God . without changing our religion, caste, culture, etc.

A God-realized soul has deep faith in God. Having been liberated from the bondage of life and death, he/she enjoys eternal bliss. Such a faithful person alone develops strength to remain equanimous and equipoised in all walks of life and at all times. If people of various religious faiths realize the common object of faith i.e. One and only One Omnipresent and Omnipotent God, they can all become members of the same global family. Then they will be able to share and exchange views on any aspect calmly, without raising any conflict. Solutions to many problems can be arrived at amicably. In other words, there can be Unity in Diversity. Such unity alone will develop Universal Brotherhood and Love amongst each other.

'True it is that to the man who loves God and desires nothing but Him, every blow becomes a blessing, every sickness becomes a sacrament and every load lifts him up.'

(From 'Begin The Day With God' by J.P. Vaswani, P-214)

It is rightly said Love begets Love. If a devotee surrenders himself/herself to the will of God lovingly with firm and unshakable faith, the latter also never forsakes His faithful devotees.

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FAITH IS TO HAVE WINGS

- **Lajwanti Govind Sindhi, Kolhapur**

Faith in Buddhism is defined as faith in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha and is intended to lead to the goal of awakening or Nirvana. Faith implies a resolute and steadfast pursuit of Truth. It combines the steadfast resolution that one will do a thing with the self-confidence that one can do it.

To achieve success in good causes we need glory of faith. It is essential for the inquisitive disciple that after proper investigation he should take shelter of a perfect Spiritual Guide. After all consolation he should try to complete this spiritual journey and have full faith in God. Our true faith must be in the Spiritual Guide. From him only we get satisfaction. A true Spiritual Guide is an embodiment of contentment. He gives the support of total spiritual guidance. He has full faith in God. Therefore, it is not necessary for him to have faith in anyone else. The reason why birds can fly is that they have perfect faith, for to have faith is to have wings.

When man's faith fades away from man, life becomes meaningless. On the day man loses the hope, the meaning of life escapes. The day we lose hope, there is downfall in the life:

*Where there is faith there is love.
Where there is love there is peace.
Where there is peace there is God.
Where there is God there is bliss.*

Trust and faith work. Husband and wife's relationship is based on trust and faith. Believe and achieve, and in order to do so, faith is essential. It is the faith that men need today. We should have .

1. faith in Self;
2. faith in God;
3. remember God constantly; and
4. establish relationship with God.

Faith in Self: Every human being in this world is a child of God, who is the Father of us all. We have all the elevated qualities of God, the Supreme Father. Faith is the gift of God. Therefore, we must pray again and again for faith. If you have faith, you can do anything. Faith can move mountains. Troubles are part of life. They cannot be avoided. My faith is in God and I am always sure I will find a solution to my problems. We walk by faith not by sight. Seekers are no longer happy with blind faith. They need practices that help them understand life. If you have faith in the cause and the means and in God, the hot Sun will be cool for you. God helps those who help themselves. In fact, it is our actions which result in the sorrow and happiness experienced by us.

Faith in God: Faith in God means total surrender of our mind and intellect to Him. There should not be the slightest doubt in any situation or at any time. Unbroken faith guarantees God's help. God is the canopy of our protection. He says, "Have full faith in Me and you will receive My help." If we have faith that God is always with us, all the time, His help is definitely assured. One can always say "I have faith in God" but such a faith can function only when one practices that. Finding your own faith is the way to pray because there are no cross connections when you direct dial to the Almighty.

Remembering God constantly: To connect our intellect to Him. The more we remember God, the lighter the burden of sins becomes and the easier it will be for God's help to penetrate its way to us. When we constantly remember God, our mind becomes calm, silent and peaceful.

Establish relationship with God: We should have faith in and attachment and desires for the true God. Faith is the culmination of reason. Work without faith is like an attempt to reach the bottomless pit. Faith is the force of life. Relationships are connected with Faith and Love. It is difficult to measure the value of faith and reverence. With the help of faith and reverence, violence turns into peace, disappointment into hope, and attachment into evenness. Faith and prayers work a lot in men's affairs. There lives more faith in honest doubt. It is faith that inculcates the desire in us to transform ourselves. Man's great weakness is lack of faith. A robust faith does not see difficulties, that is, it looks beyond the difficulties and sees the goal.

You can measure a man's faith pretty well by the objections and obstacles and difficulties he encounters.

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ENLIGHTENED FAITH REDEEMS MANKIND

- **G.K. Malhotra, Chandigarh**

The word Faith has wider connotations. It can be trust or confidence reposed in an individual or a group of persons, may be friends, brothers or sisters, husband-wife, partners in business, etc. Betrayal of trust hurts deeply and leaves lasting scars on the psyche of the persons involved. The lack of faith even in one's own family has ruined and destroyed many homes. In a society, we should endeavor to observe rules of justice, equity and total faith.

The other meaning of faith relates to beliefs in a religious or a system of religious beliefs. In the modern world, there are three categories of human beings i.e. Atheists, Theists and Agnostics. Prof. Harold Laski says that Karl Marx was an atheist and did not believe in God. He was as wrong as the theists who maintain that there is a God but have not seen Him. The agnostics continue to sit on the fence. They are not firm whether or not God exists. It is true, that due to the influence of Karl Marx in most communist countries, religion has withered away. These countries, in fact, have suppressed religion and its propagation.

If we trace the history of mankind, the primitive concepts and practices began with the first man on the earth. Our ancestors worshipped the Sun, Moon, Stars and other elements such as Fire (Agni), Water (Jal) and Earth (Dharti). All these elements, invisible or manifest, were identified for the physical body. The religious beliefs of people, races, tribes and communities inhabiting various regions continue to be strengthened despite differences, varied customs, practices, habits, character, inclinations and idea. The world today is afflicted with hatred, ethnic violence and the people find the present world unlivable.

The teachings of prophets bring hope to humanity. Countless temples, churches, mosques and Gurudwaras and the large crowds that throng them all over the world proclaim the glory of spirituality and noble values of human life. All the prophets preached love and compassion for co-existence of the mankind. Despite religious edicts and exhortations, religions and the whole mankind stand divided for want of knowledgeable faith in God. A Hindu worships his favourite Deity, a Muslim goes to the

Mosque for prayer (Namaz) and a Christian has his fellowship with the faithful in the Church. In this regard an eminent Urdu Poet Allama Iqbal says:-

Whenever I prostrate myself in prayer, a voice comes from the earth: your heart is idolatrous, what will you get from the prayer?

The faith is an essential part of worship. In fact, man is groping in the dark because of his ignorance and lack of faith in God. He does not know that without realizing God, he cannot attain the Ultimate Truth. The question arises from where we can attain this Divine Knowledge? The holy Bhagavad Gita sermonizes:-

“Obtain that knowledge (from sages) through reverence, inquiry and innocent solicitations and the sages who are aware of the reality, will initiate you into it”.

- Bhagavad Gita, 4:34

Know thyself+sermonizes the Holy Bible and further elucidates:-

“Ask, it shall be given to you; Seek, and ye shall find; Know, and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh, receiveth; and that seeketh, Findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.”

St. Mathew, 7:7:8

The moment the Divine Knowledge is divulged to the seeker, he is blessed with an abiding perception of Ultimate Reality and all his misconceptions and apprehensions are bound to disappear. Ego vanishes and faith in God is affirmed.

Watching the miserable plight of the mankind, the Nirankari Mission is bringing about a spiritual revolution, ridding the society of the evils of social inequality, hatred, discord and enmity. The Mission has launched a world-wide movement for spreading the spiritual awareness by bestowing Divine Knowledge upon the earnest seekers. The Mission has set up its branches in almost all the countries for the propagation of truth and for the promotion of universal brotherhood. For this sacred purpose, His Holiness Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj, being the Spiritual Head of the Nirankari Mission, undertakes extensive salvation tours in India and abroad to redeem the mankind with the enlightened faith in the Fatherhood of God.

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FIND FAITH IN FORMLESS FRIENDS

- **Krishan Lal Thakur, Ambala City**

Very often we say that I have faith in judiciary, faith in my doctor, faith in my parents, faith in my children, faith in my boss, faith in my friend and so on. When we have faith in someone, it implies that we are in safe hands and care. No harm will be done, no injustice will be done. When it comes to finding a faithful friend in whom we can confide, who rejoices with us, who overlooks our failures, manages our crises, in whose company we get solace, who listens to our problems, silently and patiently, who does not mind anything, who loves us, then we say, %o have faith in such and such person+. We surrender and do not fear him. The worldly friends may disappoint us at some of the times, at some of the places.

Faith in Satguru and God

In pursuit of search for a good friends, we tend to forget the rest, all time friend who is available on our beck and call . %The Nirankar+(Formless). Repose faith in Formless Friend. We will never find Him lacking or wanting. This friend will never disappoint us. Always ready to help us, anywhere, any time, and in any situation. Have faith in Him and give Him His rightful place in your life and be prepared to watch miracles to happen. Miracles are not governed by the law of nature.

The word faith also connotes a sect, cult or faction one belongs to or has adopted. We may have faith in any sect of our liking according to our choice or inherit it from the family of our birth: we may belong to any caste or creed, but one thing is very common; mainstream of spirituality is the same, mainstay of the religion is the same. People talk of one God, knowing Him, seeing Him equally in all human beings and yet they lack faith in Him and in His flawless functioning.

Even, if one is persuaded for receiving God's knowledge and gets an opportunity too, if hundreds of enlightened persons preach him, and beyond this even if God Himself descends and pats and tells, %Hello, I am here+and try to bestow the Divine Knowledge but in the absence of Faith, one cannot have it. He will remain bereft of the bliss. His slate will remain as blank as ever. His heart will remain unfilled. However, if this encounter with God and company of the enlightened saints is accompanied by Faith, the person will first agree and then know Him and lastly be one with Him.

We may come across those who have faith but do not know God. That means lot of work remains to be done to transform belief into faith.

A religious soul without faith does many things like constructing religious places and other pious deeds but remains devoid of Godly traits. But those who have faith and realized God, treat all human beings as temples of God. By faith we receive from God and by the law of nature we receive from the mundane world. Laws always govern and put shackles, whereas Faith flows freely.

When we are faced with problems, faith helps ease our grief and anxieties. If we have faith in God, we entrust our troubles to God. We commit doing our best but stop worrying about its outcome. The greater our faith in God, no matter how it is manifested, the easier it is to carry our burdens.

Faith is not Fear

A poor man stands with folded hands in front of a wealthy person, a weak man standing in front of a strong man, an officer bowing in front of a minister, in times of difficulties a person leads to a dacoit to save him or his belongings, is Fear. It cannot be termed as Faith.

Faith Destroys Fear

Once a lady was sitting in a boat with her husband when the boat started tilting left and right due to strong wind as if it was on the verge of sinking. The lady got afraid whereas her husband was carefree, not bothered, not afraid. The lady enquired from her husband, as to why he was carefree and not afraid. Instead of replying, her husband took a piece of baton and lifted it as if to hit the lady on her head. But the lady did not move. When the lady's husband asked her about her casual behavior, she told her husband, %How can you hit me? You love me and I am under your care and protection. I have faith in you, so I am not afraid. I know you cannot harm me.+ The husband clarified, %As you are not afraid of me because you are under my protection, so also I am in the hands, of God, under His protection. I have all the faith in His functioning. That is why I am calm even in distress. I am not afraid.+

So the person who surrenders to the will of God and accepts everything as His will and finds faith in Him needs no fear.

Faith Heals

Faith can cure not only diseases originated from a sick mind but can take care of even surgical cases. We come across persons who defied the scientific reasoning and became well when they had Faith, with or without medicines.

One such case happened which I came across. One devotee suffered from a throat ailment and lost his speech. The doctors advised him not to speak lest he may lose his speech permanently. He defied the medical advice and continued to speak in the holy congregations, glorifying God and the Satguru. In two years time, he improved his speech gradually. Now, he is alright and the most sought-after speaker.

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FAITH – A SECRET

- **Dr. Satya Bhatia 'Anand', Delhi**

Faith in the Satguru, faith in ourselves. This is the secret of faith. The Satguru is the form of the Formless and one must have tremendous faith in him and then one faces no suffering. He knows what are your requirements; therefore, if there is no desire, there is no suffering. We understand that desires are wrong. But what is meant by giving up desires? That is the line of thought. All will be metamorphosed as soon as you begin to see things in that light. If you put Nirankar (Formless) in your every movement, in your form, in your conversation, in everything, the whole scene will change and the world, instead of appearing one of woes and misery, will become a heaven. %The Kingdom of Heaven is within you+, says Jesus. So say Vedanta and the Satguru, too.

It is in love that religion exists and not in ceremony . in the pure heart and sincere love in the heart. When a man is pure in mind, his coming into a holy congregation and remembering Satguru is beneficial. The prayers of those who are pure in mind, will be answered by Nirankar. External adoration is only a symbol of internal worship, but internal worship and purity are the real things.

This is the gist of all adorations: to be pure and to do good to others. One who sees Formless in the poor, in the weak and in the diseased, really worships Nirankar (Formless). He, who has served and helped one poor man, seeing Formless in him without thinking of his caste or creed or race or anything else, with him Formless is more pleased than with the man who wants to see Him in the temples.

The history of the world is the history of a few men who had faith in themselves. That faith calls out the Divinity within. You can do anything. You will fail only when you do not strive sufficiently to manifest infinite power.

As soon as man loses faith, it is as good as death comes. One must have tremendous faith in the Satguru. Until one has it, one cannot aspire to be a realized person. A strong faith in the Satguru and the consequent eagerness to reach the Satguru constitute faith.

Regular God-remembrance (Simran) as directed by the Satguru and also having a pure mind, would be effective and beneficial.

We know so little about our real selves! And so little again of Reality! It is all mysterious. Consider the amount and kind of help we must have before we can make any real progress on the path of spirituality: who can tell us if we are going along the right path or have lost our way? Nobody but the Satguru. The Satguru infuses strength into the disciple. When there are difficulties in the way, when we lose the path or get entangled, Nirankar graciously places our feet again on the right path and unites the knots that bind us.

Such has been the experience of all who have realized Formless. It is almost being one with the Impersonal. One's mind is suffused with Light Divine. To serve God is to serve the Ideal itself. The ideal becomes man (Satguru). To submit to him is to identify oneself with Formless.

So, when we submit to a competent and True Satguru and accept him as our Satguru, we must regard him as Formless Himself and owe him our whole-hearted allegiance with full faith. Therefore, have full faith in the Satguru (Formless in form) and have faith in yourself. This is the secret of Faith.

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FAITH IN FORMLESS

- **Poonam Bhagchandani, Mumbai**

A child's education begins at home. A child is taught to offer prayers to God when he gets up in the morning and before he retires to bed. When he goes to school, the child is taught to offer prayers before the school begins and to say a prayer of thanks-giving

to God when the school is over. Due to such practices, a faith is instilled in the child's mind that there is a Supreme Entity above us all whom we should worship. He is the Generator, Operator and Destroyer of the universe. This faith about the existence of God is instilled in the child's mind due to the environment he is brought up in. Accordingly, the child worships a deity or goes to a Mosque, Church, Temple, Gurudwara and so on to offer his prayers.

As the child grows up, he comes in contact with a larger group of people. His intellectual capacity increases. He is able to take decisions. He can decide what is right and what is wrong. Some individuals have an inborn yearning for knowledge, that is, to know the creator and the purpose of human life, while some develop this yearning by reading scriptures or coming in contact with person having such ideas. Such individuals search for God since their curiosity is not satisfied by the faith instilled in them in their childhood. If a seeker truly seeks God, he is provided with an opportunity to come in contact with a God-realized soul. It is said that every human is provided with an opportunity by God during his lifetime to seek the Truth from a God-realized soul. God-knowledge quenches the thirst of the seeker and the individual develops intellectual faith.

In the words of Swami Vivekananda, "So long as our needs are confined within the limits of the physical universe, we do not feel any need for God; it is only when we have hard blows in our lives and are disappointed with everything here that we feel the need for something higher, then we seek God." (*The Complete Works Of Swami Vivekananda*, VII .83). Baba Hardev Singh Ji in one of his discourses has said: "Faith based on religious rituals without God-knowledge is similar to a field not yielding crop though it has been ploughed, irrigated and manured but the seed has not been sown. Unless the seed of God-knowledge is sown in the field of mind, one cannot be redeemed by merely listening or reciting the scriptures." What is meant is that God-knowledge is a pre-requisite for developing intellectual faith.

The path of an electric current is called an electric circuit. The word circuit indicates that the path of the current leads back to where it started from. An electric circuit consists of the source of the current, the connecting wire, an electric bulb and the key. The key is used to start or stop the current as desired. Where the key is closed, the two ends of the connecting wire get joined and the current flows in the circuit. The current stops flowing in the circuit when the key is open. When the current flows, the bulb glows and when the current stops flowing, the bulb stops glowing. This can be compared to the situation in our lives wherein the source of current is Nirankar, the connecting wire is the True Master (Satguru), the key our faith and the bulb . our self. When we develop faith (key closed), our spiritual lamp glows and spreads light, when there is no faith, the spiritual lamp does not glow and there is darkness.

Faith is the basis of all relationship. Many of us are always in search of a pal who rejoices when we do, supports us in a crisis and is a confident in our lonely times. Our greatest friend is our formless friend, Nirankar, and Baba Hardev Singh Ji has introduced us to Him. He is omnipotent. Although He does not have a shape, size or gender, we can regard Him in any form we please because, He is everywhere and in everyone.

God is a circle whose circumference is nowhere but whose centre is everywhere. (The Complete Works Of Swami Vivekananda, II.33). He is one who bestows life on everyone, showers kindness, listens to our worldly problems and provides us the strength to face them. We may worship a picture as God but not God as the picture. It would be a folly to limit the limitless to a particular image or place.

The Nirankari Mission gives the clarion call: Know the One, Believe in the One and Be One. We do not worship images made by man but worship images of God Himself, that is, human beings: Service to humanity is service to God. Our wandering minds have come to a rest.

With faith begins the journey on the path of devotion. Now, there is no scope for ifs and buts. The True Master's teachings have to be followed in letter and spirit. Bliss here and hereafter is assured.

* * *

FAITH

- Lt. Col, B.L. Sachdeva, (Retd), Noida

Religion or spirituality is generally considered to be a matter of faith and belief, whereas philosophy relies on rational thinking and wisdom. There is a famous axiom that religion begins where philosophy ends. Are they mutually exclusive and contradictory? Faith is defined as belief that does not rest on logical proof or material evidence.

Human mind and ability to reason and rationalize are the gift of Nature or Creator. The true belief and faith in the same Creator cannot be contradictory to reason and logic, since these faculties are also His gift. What is implied is that human wisdom derived out of reasoning and logic should lead to the similar conclusions which are the result of intuition or faith.

Many religions do not like the questioning of the validity of their faith and their religious practices. However, in the Sant Nirankari Mission we do not recommend blind faith.

While initiating a new disciple and imparting Divine Knowledge, we make use of reasoning and logic to convince the new aspirant. The Satguru has nowhere asked us to discard the faculty of reasoning and part company with wisdom. However, he has cautioned us that human wisdom has limitations. The true realization of Nirankar (God) can come only through love and devotion and faith in the Satguru and we should never be proud of our intellectual prowess. Baba Avtar Singh Ji has advised us to use all our faculties to grasp the Divine Knowledge.

Listen with your ears and see with your eyes and only then have faith in the Satguru and Nirankar. Practice what you preach and thereby make your life sublime. Think, understand and only then believe but after believing you should remain steadfast and not waver.

- Avtar Bani: 330

The above implies that we should not blindly accept the gospel. Let us make use of our senses and intellect and then have firm faith. Then our words and deeds would be in consonance and we would be steadfast in our endeavour.

Belief is emotional, while wisdom is rational. Both faith and wisdom are essential for a proper grasp of the teachings of the Mission. Having faith but not wisdom makes one ignorant. Alternatively, wisdom without faith makes one agnostic and skeptic. The right faith and wisdom can co-exist simultaneously. However, faith is not dependent on any outwards moorings. Dhanna Jat is widely quoted for having reposed faith in a stone but he actually realized the Supreme through Guru Rama Nand Ji. The ideal state would be that both faith and wisdom should exist in equal measure. But in actual practice, while some emphasize faith, others emphasize wisdom. Those who lack understanding depend on faith, while those who are intelligent depend on their understanding. The former just believe and trust others easily and their action follows their belief by which their understanding grows gradually in the company of learned and the wise. The latter are always rational and want to find out the reasons first. They insist on getting to the bottom of the matter. Once they reach profound understanding, they believe firmly and practice diligently. Their minds are sharp and they have the ability to guide others in their practice.

However, there are certain aspects in religion and spirituality which can only be imbibed with faith. They are:

- (a) The theory of Karma or Cause and Effect.
- (b) Existence of Soul and God.
- (c) Rebirth.
- (d) Divinity of the Satguru
- (e) The validity of Gyan or God-knowledge.

To conclude, true faith, right understanding, right belief and wisdom based on insight and reasoning are the true ingredients for overcoming delusion and becoming enlightened.

* * *

KEY TO SUPER SUCCESS IN LIFE: FAITH

- **Radha Kishore Dash Adhikari**

The term faith means an absolute trust or strong confidence in somebody or something. Faith is the anchor to which a human life clings. Man may have his basic requirements fulfilled. He may get all comforts of life. Still he feels restless and like a fish out of water if he loses faith in himself. Faith is as vital as is breath. Otherwise a man will live like a mad creature. Faith is the propelling force that makes man go ahead. Otherwise, in spite of a sound body, a gorgeous living, he cannot find peace anywhere. So faith is a produce of one's mind and heart. A stable mind, deep feelings and a healthy body can make man have faith in himself. Once he achieves faith in himself, he can have faith in others. The world progresses only on the bedrock of faith. If man loses faith in others, the world will turn into a jungle. Chaos will dominate everything, everywhere, everywhere. Men will turn wild beasts.

Man is a blend of divinity and bestiality. When a man is bereft of faith, his bestiality will prevail over his divinity. He will possess only negative qualities. His jealousy, hatred, greed and lust will make him stoop down to the level of beasts.

Faith makes man self-reliant, self-confident. He feels very bold, courageous and zealous. He possesses the super power of the creator. He can create many innovative things. He progresses in diverse fields. He can make his world exceedingly beautiful.

In the present scenario, the modern man is drastically in need of such a staunch faith which is the key to success and to encounter the ordeals of life. This faith can easily be cultivated in hearts by our devotion, subjugation and surrender to Nirankar (God) through a great God-man like the present True Master (Satguru) His Holiness Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj whose divine radiance will purify our stained hearts and who holds the rudder to guide our souls on the right track to reach the glorious goal of our communion with the Divine Father. This magnanimous benign high priest of love enlightens the dark caves of every individual. The salvation of all lost souls is his sole motto.

All religious, all sages and philosophers highlight this Faith, the pre-requisite for the true happiness and timeless and boundless joy.

The spiritual preceptors have been preaching the dictum of Faith which can unite the whole humanity in a bond. Because Faith in oneself, Faith in others and Faith in the Supreme, can generate love for others which in turn, makes one sacrifice oneself for the sake of the humanity.

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GENUINE FAITH THROUGH DIVINE KNOWLEDGE

- Dr. V.P. Ahuja, Principal Scientist (Retd), Delhi

Faith refers to trust or belief in Absolute Truth or the Supreme Being and it has a very important role in the spiritual growth. In the spiritual garden, where the trees of love, humility, tolerance contentment and service to mankind are planted, Faith has to be an evergreen shrub. The evergreen shrub which will not be affected by any season i.e. intense cold, heat or by adverse environment. Its leaves will not fall off; it will remain evergreen.

Faith is also referred to as a religion but here Faith means unshaken belief in the Supreme Being which is called as Om, Allah, Akalpurkh, God, Nirankar, etc.

(R)

Blind Faith is thrust upon the people who are born and brought up in a certain family which have certain ideas about God, religion, mode of worship and rites and rituals. They are inclined to believe that there cannot be any other way to Truth besides their own. They become extremely self-centred. They look upon all other Faiths as superstitious and useless and condemn their followers as unbelievers. Such feelings which often lead to fanaticism and denunciation erupt from their blind faith. No one creed, a set of doctrines or dogmas can represent the Infinite and they become irrational and superstitious when they try to measure the Infinite by their finite mind. Superstitions and fanaticism are the result of ignorance, shortsightedness and, of course, the Blind Faith. On the contrary, in the Sant Nirankari Mission, the Faith is not blind as stated by Baba Gurbachan Singh Ji: "The worldly have a blind faith but saints have a living faith in God." (*Precious Pearls*, page 18). The approach to Faith is rational, flexible logical, open to discussion, satisfying, convincing and also based on one's own experience.

Also, we should not forget in this 21st century when science and mind have so much developed that even an uneducated man will not believe in something unless he perceives it, hears it with his own ears, sees it with his own eyes and is convinced; he will not have blind faith and will not believe outright. He may put forward many questions and we have to satisfy his queries by appropriate answers which may convince his mind, intellect and conscience. To me it appears the day is not far when any person will have Faith in one or the other philosophy of life without conviction. We may not present any Faith before educated or uneducated persons which is not rooted in reason. We have to answer the queries like:

*Is this Faith rational?
Does this Faith satisfy queries?*

Is it the Faith which can help to attain the main aim of life i.e. God-realization or Self-realization?

Will this dispel the superstitions?

Will this remove the conflict between different Faiths?

A man of genuine Faith, who has realized the Truth, knows that it is the same Truth, which underlies all the different creeds and sects; so he hates none and condemns none. The genuine Faith will be result-oriented. It will bring peace and harmony and thereby happiness in the family, society, states and nations.

Overall, the living Faith will turn a person a good human being, transcending all religions, dogmas and narrow sectarianism.

The Nirankari philosophy satisfies all the above queries about Faith. Avtar Bani contains several verses wherein Baba Avtar Singh Ji has stated that first you satisfy your queries and then have Faith in this Divine Knowledge (Brahmgyan), which is rational.

First listen with your own ears, then behold with your own eyes and then only have Faith in God.

Avtar Bani : 330

*Unless the mind visualizes God, it is not convinced and
there can be no love unless the mind is convinced;
without love devotion is not possible and without
devotion it is not possible to transcend the worldly sea.*

Avtar Bani : 78

The majority of verses in the Avtar Bani are rooted in reason, satisfy the intellectual queries and are rational in approach.

The Mission emphasizes that the pre-requisite for genuine Faith in God is Divine Knowledge, which is imparted by a living Satguru. The need of such a Spiritual Guide has been indicated umpteen times in religious scriptures. No amount of bookish knowledge, intelligence, piety, performing rites and rituals will come to the rescue of the person except the Divine Knowledge. Lord Krishna himself told Arjuna to approach a Brahmgyani who has seen, experienced and lived with God. Serve him with humility, pray to him with folded hands, request him for Brahmgyan. If he is pleased with you, he will bestow the Divine Knowledge upon you.

Bhagvad Gita . 4:34

Brahmgyan is the knowledge of the Divine who is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the universe. At present this knowledge is being bestowed by Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj.

As soon as the Divine Knowledge is attained by a seeker all his doubts, delusions, illusions, dogmas, superstitions and apprehensions vanish. He realizes the difference between the Creator and the creation. He feels the presence of God everywhere, in everything and all the time. His faith grows stronger day-by-day when he attends the congregation of saints, hear their viewpoints and discusses it at length with other devotees. The five basic principles of the Mission, which are dynamic, when adopted in day-to-day activities, bring happiness, joy and bliss in his life. This inculcates a genuine Faith in the disciple and thus he lives with a living Faith in God as stated above.

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FAITH AND SATGURU

- **Dr. Vinod Kumar Singh, Varanasi**

Faith = Firm belief. A pupil asked Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa: What is right? Faith in formless God or God in human form? Ramakrishna told him: Faith in either will do. Both are the same. Be firm in which you believe in.

For the last two hundred years, science has been deeply engaged in solving the mystery of life. It is true that not only life but the whole cosmos is a mystery. Recently, LHC has been developed by the European scientists to discover the mystery of life through atom. Actually, the whole cosmos is made up of molecules (usually a group of

atoms). The molecules have the property to cover the light, the truth. God is light. All holy books assure:

Bible (John 8:12): I am the light of the world, whoever follows me shall have the light of life and will never walk in darkness.

Quran (25:35): Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth. Light upon light, Allah guideth unto his light whom he wills.

Adi Granth (13): This Divine Light manifests only by the kind grace of the Guru.

God is Divine Light. The same Divine Light manifests itself in the human form as the Satguru. Only the Satguru bestows the Divine Light and pulls out men from the dark dungeon. Faith in the Satguru is essential.

God is Light, the Existence, the Truth. He is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient, revealed by the Satguru only. Though air is formless, yet we can experience it. Similarly, Formless God can be experienced: experienced by heart, experienced by eternal consciousness. Senses are not capable, not enough and hence fail to experience God. Faith in the Satguru and Nirankar (Formless) is essential. The Satguru alone can solve this mystery.

Avtar Bani (330): First listen with your ears, then behold with your own eyes and only then have faith in God. The devotees have faith in God but the self-willed do not believe. Faith in the Satguru is must for God-realization or Self-realization.

Since the whole cosmos belongs to God, He is the creator, nurturer and assimilator and hence the creation as well as the Creator both are a mystery. These can be experienced through the Satguru who is the link between God and the material world. The cosmos is like a wave in the creation just like a wave in the ocean. Both are the same, cannot be separated but can be beheld. If one knows the property of a drop of the ocean, one can understand the property of the ocean.

The Super Soul and Nature are intermingled like cream in the milk and can be distinguished by the grace of the Satguru. The soul of every person is a tiny constituent of the Super Soul which is covered by ~~M~~Maya the darkness.

Lord Krishna says (Gita, 2:25): Veiled by My Yogmaya (Divine potency), I am not manifest to all. Hence these ignorant folk fail to recognize Me, the unborn and imperishable supreme deity.

Quran to says (Sura – 2:7): Allah has set a seal upon their hearing and there is a covering over their eyes and there is a great punishment for them.

One has to realize the truth in time. The human body is meant for this, but people are ignorant. They are slumbering in ignorance. They need awakening. This is done by the Satguru. During all the ages the Satguru of the time exhorted the people to realize the Supreme Deity. Only a few were lucky to realize. Not so easy. Faith is must. Faith wins. One must have faith in the Satguru and his teachings.

Quran says (Sura 2:285): The apostle believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers: they all believe in Allah and his angels and his books and his apostles; we make no distinction between any of his apostles; and they say; we hear and obey our Lord! Thy forgiveness (do we crave), and do Thee is the course. Belief is essential.

Bible too says (NT.MK.11: 22-24): Jesus answered them, "Have faith in God". I assure you that whoever tells this hill to get up and throw itself in the sea and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that you have received it, and you will be given whatever you ask for.

Avtar Bani (277) says: The one who surrenders to the will of the Formless God and reposes faith in the True Master, Avtar says, he is ever blissful and dwells in the abode of angels.

Adi Granth (Jap 5, P-2) too says: Recite and listen with loving faith in your mind. Your affliction shall be dispelled and peace shall come home.

The famous poet Mirza Ghalib too had faith in God. Once of his rare philosophical couplets means:

When one apart from you exist, why this struggle and alarm, O God?

Nirankaris have full faith in Nirankar and Sadguru Baba Hardev Singh Ji Maharaj. They have realized the Formless God and tread on the path shown by Baba Ji.

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FAITH: DIVINITY IN HUMAN FORM

- **Anonymous**

To have faith in God is God's grace. It is a blessing from God to man and His highest form of mercy.

Faith is a spontaneous flow of divinity in a human being. It is a matter of depth of heart. It is beyond reasoning and questioning. It can be felt and experienced but cannot be explained or described. It is peace and bliss in true perspective. Faith is miraculous most of the times, for : %ust are the ways of God and mysterious are the ways of justice.

Faith is surrender to the Supreme Power and then believing His will and His works as right at all times.

Faith in God is faith in oneself. On knowing one's true self as an immortal soul and one's vast self as the Super Soul i.e. God Formless by the grace of the True Master, faith is born in a human heart. It grows and develops by selfless service, constant God-remembrance and attending holy congregations of saints. Faith can be infinite; it has always the scope of increasing and deepening. It feeds and nourishes itself by practicing itself in events and happenings of day-to-day life. It sustains itself moment to moment in all situations and circumstances. Faith, unless it is complete, is not of much value. Complete faith does wonders in human life.

Faith in God can be compared to a tree whose trunk and roots are firm and strong but leave and branches keep swinging with the wind. In all ups and downs of life, faith is put at stake and in passing through those trials, it attains stability and then swings high.

Faith and love go together. Deep in heart and high in spirit, it is the zeal and enthusiasm of life. It adorns life and provides support to the wavering mind. The personality of such an individual is pleasant and attractive. He becomes the source of joy and solace to his fellow beings. Faith can cure and heal ailments; it can help carry out all worldly works in an easy and smooth manner.

A person of faith is of utmost importance and immense utility to the society and mankind. The genuine faith in God's works and His will sets an atmosphere of peace, bliss and comfort all around the person and anyone can benefit from it. The touch of such an awakened human being transmits vibrations of prosperity. His vision brings about abundance. His presence is a matter of joy.

Faith in one heart induces faith in others. Faith transmits happiness and sets a base for inner beauty and divine fragrance. Life blooms with faith and converts into divine instrument.

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FAITH IN DIVINITY

- Poonam Pal, Delhi

Faith in God is symbolic of God's infinite grace. It is a gift of God and His kind compassion to man, the blessed soul. Faith develops spontaneously after God-realization by the grace of a True Master and cannot be acquired by self-effort or performing rites, rituals and acts of charity and meditation.

Faith is the benign blessing of Divinity to a human being. It symbolizes the perception of Truth and then imbibing divine qualities in the head and heart. Faith emanates from indepth love and devotion to God and the True Master, through whom the eternal Truth can be realized. As one constantly treads the path of truth and righteousness, ever engaged in doing Simran (God-remembrance), Satsang (attending congregation of saints) and Sewa (rendering selfless service to the people), one's faith grows stronger and stronger everyday.

Faith based on realization of Truth is beyond reasoning and questioning. It is a by-product of devotion and dedication to God and the True Master. Only the men of faith in Divinity realize the importance of faith in every facet of life as the taste of pudding lies in eating it and it cannot be explained or described in words.

Mostly, people have blind faith and such faith tatters whenever there are challenges and adverse circumstances. Since there is no real foundation of such faith, whatever faith one acquires is the projection of one's own imagination. Therefore, the true faith which one acquires after God-realization is stable and does not waver even in adverse circumstances.

A man of faith does everything in the name of God and all acts done by him are dedicated to God. In other words, a devotee is totally selfless and he surrenders to the will of God. Therefore, he is immune from the consequences of his actions.

Life without faith in God is devoid of peace and bliss. So, it is imperative for every human being to know God and lead a peaceful and blissful life.

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