



Effort And Faith

Sadhana, spiritual practice, is a scientific process. It is as much an exact science as physical science. But it is a divine science, a transcendental science. The Upanishads call it *Paravidya*, a science that transcends all the known norms and relativity. It is a science that transcends time, space, here, there, now, then, and name and form. It is the quest after the timeless, the Eternal. It follows certain precise patterns, which invariably follow exact laws. So, upon the inner field of the spiritual universe, all things move in a predictable manner according to precise laws.

All achievement is the result of effort in a suitable manner in the right direction. Misdirected effort would not achieve the desired results. One should also recognise well that one must persevere. No scientific discovery was made with a single attempt. No fruit appears on a tree before its time. So, with patience one has to persevere in putting forth the needed effort. This is wisdom. In this science, no effort is ever wasted, no effort is in vain, no effort is futile.

Prayer believes and work achieves. Therefore the saying: “Pray and also work.” Go on working, go on praying. Your work will guarantee and ensure that your prayer comes true. And your prayer assures and guarantees that you will not stop midway. It fills you with a force, a feeling, an urge, a drive. The force of the faith, the belief, makes the work authentic, genuine, effective and fruitful. Faith trust and devotion are an art, an inner state that is a manifestation of that within you which is already divine. Sadhana is a science, an effort through the body, mind, intellect, emotions, and through certain techniques and processes. When it is linked with the divine force of shraddha, knowledge is obtained. “*Shraddhavan Labhate Jnanam* – The man who is full of faith obtains knowledge.” [Gita 4.39] What a person believes in, that verily constitutes his personality. Thus when linked together – prayer with faith, and effort with resolution and calm, patient perseverance – they bring about seeming miracles.

The wise sadhaka is never perturbed, and never gives up. Calmly, patiently, perseveringly and continuously, he keeps up the effort that leads to Realisation. The hallmark of Yoga is abhayasa – repeated, continuous effort. It is the inner svarupa of Yoga. It is those that keep on struggling upwards that reach the peak of the mountain. They say: “I am drawing nearer. The peak is closer to me now.” This is the vision that grants fulfilment.

God Bless You All!

■ Swami Chidananda