Faith precedes Spiritual Experience

Second Edition

A Compilation from the works of
Sri Aurobindo & the Mother

Compiled by Jamshed M Mavalwalla

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Sri Aurobindo Society
AUROPUBLICATIONS
POWERFUL THOUGHTS, INSPIRING VISION

Faith Precedes Spiritual Experience

Second Edition

First Edition: 2018
Second Edition: 2026

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www.aurosociety.org

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Vijaybhai's Note on Comprehensive Compilation

All over the world, there is a growing interest in spirituality and Yoga. There is a search for the true meaning and purpose of life, for deeper solutions to the problems that confront us all, and for ways in which we can contribute to evolutionary change and progress.

In this search, more and more people are turning to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother for guidance and enlightenment. But in their voluminous writings, they do not know where to find the answers they are looking for.

In this regard the Mother has said,

> "*It is not by books that Sri Aurobindo ought to be studied but by subjects—what he has said on the Divine, on Unity, on religion, on evolution, on education, on self-perfection, on supermind, etc., etc.*"
>
> (CWM 12: 206)

On another occasion She said:

> "*If you want to know what Sri Aurobindo has said on a given subject, you must at least read all he has written on that subject. You will then see that he seems to have said the most contradictory things. But when one has read everything and understood a little, one sees that all the*

contradictions complement one another and are organised and unified in an integral synthesis."

(CWM 16: 309–310)

While several compilations are now available, many sincere spiritual seekers have felt the need for Comprehensive Compilations from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on specific subjects, in which the contents are further organised into sub-topics, so that one can find everything one is looking for in one place.

This compilation is an effort to fulfil this need and thus help spiritual seekers in their journey and sadhana. We hope that this compilation will help us gain greater mental clarity about a subject so that we can channel our efforts in the right direction. For Sri Aurobindo has written:

"*It is always better to make an effort in the right direction; even if one fails the effort bears some result and is never lost.*"

(CWSA 29: 87)

We will be glad to receive suggestions and feedback from the readers.

Vijay

Preface

This compilation, "*Faith Precedes Spiritual Experience*", is the second book in the series of books on faith. To know what faith really means, it is recommended to refer to the first book, "*Fundamental Faith Required in Yoga*".

The Mother also emphasizes that, if one wishes always to progress, one must understand more completely what one already knows.

> "For those who want always to progress, there are three major ways of progressing:
>
> (1) To widen the field of one's consciousness.
>
> (2) To understand ever better and more completely what one knows.
>
> (3) To find the Divine and surrender more and more to His Will."
>
> (CWM 16: 435–436)

The purpose of this comprehensive compilation is to help the reader understand that one has faith long before one has spiritual experience. The headings and subheadings are intended to guide the reader towards a clearer and deeper understanding. However, it is important to read the quotations themselves, for Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's words are infused with a

consciousness infinitely higher than our own. Therefore, reading these quotations will help the reader not only understand that faith precedes experience but also, and most importantly, elevate his or her consciousness.

The quotations in this compilation are taken from the volumes of *The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* (CWSA) and the *Collected Works of the Mother* (CWM), Second Edition. Each quotation is followed by the title of the book, the volume number, and the page number from which it has been taken.

While the passages from Sri Aurobindo are in the original English, most of the passages from the Mother (selections from her talks and writings) are translations from the original French. We must also bear in mind that the excerpts have been taken out of their original context and that a compilation, by its very nature, is likely to have a personal and subjective approach. A sincere attempt, however, has been made to remain faithful to the vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Those who would like to read the fuller text are advised to consult *The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo* (CWSA) and the *Collected Works of the Mother* (CWM), Second Edition.

The section headings and subheadings have also been provided by the compiler to bring clarity to the selected topic.

I pray that this book may help the readers to understand the indispensable importance of faith in Yoga and the help it can give them in realising the Divine.

Jamshed M. Mavalwalla

"This *sraddha* ... is in reality an influence from the supreme Spirit ... a message from our supramental being which is calling the lower nature to rise out of its petty present to a great self-becoming and self-exceeding. And that which receives the influence and answers to the call is ... the inner soul ..." (CWSA 24: 774)

"I [Sri Aurobindo] mean by it [faith] a dynamic intuitive conviction in the inner being of the truth of supersensible things which cannot be proved by any physical evidence but which are a subject of experience." (CWSA 28: 347)

"There is one kind of faith demanded as indispensable by the integral Yoga and that may be described as faith in God and the Shakti, faith in the presence and power of the Divine in us and the world, a faith that all in the world is the working of one divine Shakti, that all the steps of the Yoga, its strivings and sufferings and failures as well as its successes and satisfactions and victories are utilities and necessities of her workings and that by a firm and strong dependence on and a total self-surrender to the Divine and to his Shakti in us we can attain to oneness and freedom and victory and perfection." (CWSA 24: 771)

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I—One Has Faith Long Before One Has the Experience

1.

"As for experience being necessary for faith and no faith possible without it, that contradicts human psychology altogether. Thousands of people have faith before they have experience and it is the faith that helps them to the experience. The doctrine 'No belief without proof' applies to physical science, it would be disastrous in the field of spirituality—or for that matter in the field of human action. The saints or bhaktas have the faith in God long before they get the experience of God—the man of action has the faith in his cause long before his cause is crowned with success—otherwise they would not have been able to struggle persistently towards their end in spite of defeat, failure and deadly peril.**"** (CWSA 29: 94–95)

2.

"… I want to say something about the faith which you say you don't have and can't have in the absence of experience. First of all, faith does not depend upon experience; it is something that is there before experience. When one starts the Yoga, it is not usually on the strength of experience, but on the strength of faith." (CWSA 29: 92)

"Faith is a certitude which is not necessarily based on experience and knowledge." (CWM 14: 79)

3.

"It is so not only in Yoga and the spiritual life, but in ordinary life also. All men of action, discoverers, inventors, creators of knowledge proceed by faith and, until the proof is made or the thing done, they go on in spite of disappointment, failure, disproof, denial, because of something in them that tells them that this is the truth, the thing that must be followed and done." (CWSA 29: 92–93)

4.

"One approaches the Divine through faith; concrete experience comes as a result of sadhana. One cannot demand a direct experience without doing anything to prepare the consciousness for it. If one feels the call, one follows it—if there is no call, then there is no need to seek the Divine. Faith is sufficient to start with …" (CWSA 29: 77)

"Q: *Sweet Mother, if there is someone who wants to have experiences or something like that, what is the first thing he should do?*

A: ... We spend our time having experiences. You mean having a contact with other realities than physical ones? Is it that? Ah!

Well, I think the first condition is to have, to begin with, the faith that there is something other than the physical reality. This can be the first condition. Then the second condition is to try to find what it is, and the best field of action is oneself." (CWM 7: 77)

5.

"Persevere and what is still crooked will be made straight and you will know and feel concretely the truth of the Divine's presence and your faith will be justified by direct experience." (CWSA 29: 126)

6.

"To the question in your last letter there can be no reply except that it is only either a single-minded faith or a fixed will that can give you the open road to the Yoga. It is because your ideas and your will are in a constant state of flux or of oscillation that you do not succeed. Even with a deficient faith, a fixed mind and will can carry one on and bring the experiences by which an uncertain faith is changed into certitude." (CWSA 29: 445)

7.

Q: "*If one has faith in the Divine and also trust, what is the difference between faith and trust?*

A: Faith is something much more integral—that is what Sri Aurobindo has written—much more integral than trust. You see, you have trust in the Divine, in the sense that you are convinced that all that comes from Him will always be the best for you: whatever His decision and whatever the experience He sends you or the circumstances in which He puts you, it will always be what is best for you. This is trust. But faith—that kind of unshakable certitude in the very existence of God—faith is something that seizes the whole being. It is not only mental, psychic or vital: it is the whole being, entirely, which has faith. Faith leads straight to experience.

Q: *Can't trust be total and entire?*

A: Not necessarily. Well, there is a shade of difference—however, I don't know, it is not the same thing.

One has given oneself totally to the divine work, one has faith in it, not only in its possibility, but faith that it is *the* thing which is true and which must be, and one gives oneself entirely to it, without asking what will happen. And so, therein or thereon may be grafted a certitude, a confidence that one is capable of accomplishing it, that is, of participating in it and doing it because one has given oneself to it—a confidence that what one is going to do, what one wants to do, one will be able to do; that this realisation one wants to attain,

one will attain. The first does not put any questions, does not think of the results: it gives itself entirely—it gives itself and then that's all. It is something that absorbs one completely. The other may be grafted upon it. Confidence says: 'Yes, I shall participate, realise what I want to realise, I shall surely take part in this work.' The other one has faith in the Divine, that it is the Divine who is all, and can do all, and does all... and who is the only real existence—and one gives oneself entirely to this faith, to the Divine, that's all. One has faith in the existence of the Divine and gives oneself; and there can also be grafted upon this a trust that this relation one has with the Divine, this faith one has in the Divine, will work in such a way that all that happens to him—whatever it may be, all that happens to him—will not only be an expression of the divine will (that of course is understood) but also the best that could happen, that nothing better could have happened to him, since it is the Divine who is doing it for him. This attitude is not necessarily a part of faith, for faith does not question anything, it does not ask what the consequence of its self-giving will be—it gives itself, and—that's all; while confidence can come and say, 'That's what the result will be.' And this is an absolute fact, that is, the moment one gives oneself entirely to the Divine, without calculating, in a total faith, without bargaining of any kind—one gives oneself, and then, come what may! 'That does not concern me, I just give

myself'—automatically it will always be for you, in all circumstances, at every moment, the best that will happen... not the way you conceive of it (naturally, thought knows nothing), but in reality. Well, there is a part of the being which can become aware of this and have this confidence. This is something added on to faith which gives it more strength, a strength—how shall I put it?—of total acceptance and the best utilisation of what happens." (CWM 6: 122–123)

II—Faith Can Bring Realisations

1.

"Faith is a necessary means for arriving at realisation because we are ignorant and do not yet know that which we are seeking to realise; ..." (CWSA 28: 272)

2.

"I spoke of a strong central and if possible complete faith because your attitude seemed to be that you only cared for the full response—that is, realisation, the Presence, regarding all else as quite unsatisfactory, and your prayer was not bringing you that. But prayer by itself does not usually bring that at once—only if there is a burning faith at the centre or a complete faith in all the parts of the being. That does not mean that those whose faith is not so strong or surrender complete cannot arrive, but usually they have to go at first by small steps and to face the difficulties of their nature until by perseverance or tapasya they make a sufficient opening. Even a faltering faith and a slow and partial surrender have their force and their result, otherwise only the rare few could do sadhana at all." (CWSA 29: 95–96)

3.

"What the Dhammapada means when it speaks of faith is not at all the belief in a dogma or a religion, it is not even

faith in the teaching of the Master; it is faith in one's own possibilities, the certitude that whatever the difficulties, whatever the obstacles, whatever the imperfections, even the negations in the being, one is born for the realisation and one *will* realise.

The will must never falter, the effort must be persevering and the faith unshakable. Then instead of spending years to realise what one has to realise, one can do it in a few months, sometimes even in a few days and, if there is sufficient intensity, in a few hours. That is to say, you can take a position within yourself and no bad will that attacks the realisation will have any more power over you than the storm has over a rock.

After that, the way is no longer difficult; it becomes extraordinarily interesting." (CWM 3: 189)

4.

"The more the faith, the more rapid the result is likely to be." (CWSA 29: 107)

5.

"It is by confidence in the Mother that the opening needed will come when your consciousness is ready. There is no harm in arranging your present work so that there will be time and energy for some meditation, but it is not by meditation alone that what is needed will come.

It is by faith and openness to the Mother." (CWSA 29: 109)

6.

"There is nothing unintelligible in what I say about strength and Grace. Strength has a value for spiritual realisation, but to say that it can be done by strength only and by no other means is a violent exaggeration. Grace is not an invention, it is a fact of spiritual experience. Many who would be considered as mere nothings by the wise and strong have attained by Grace; illiterate, without mental power or training, without 'strength' of character or will, they have yet aspired and suddenly or rapidly grown into spiritual realisation, because they had faith or because they were sincere." (CWSA 29: 172)

7.

"The meaning was simply that these are the conditions for the realisation in the Yoga—devotion, faith in Divine help, resolution, mental sincerity, peace in the vital—if these are there, the realisation will come." (CWSA 32: 556)

8.

"The outer consciousness can grow in faith, fidelity to the Divine, reverence, love, worship and adoration, great things in themselves,— though in fact these things too

come from within,—but realisation can only take place when the inner being is awake with its vision and feeling of things unseen. Till then, one can feel the results of the divine help and, if one has faith, know that they are the work of the Divine; but it is only then that one can feel clearly the Force at work, the divine Presence, the direct communion." (CWSA 30: 212)

III—How Faith Leads to Spiritual Experience

1.

"It [faith] is called blind by the sceptical intellect because it refuses to be guided by outer appearances or seeming facts,—for it looks to the truth behind,—and does not walk on the crutches of proof and evidence. It is an intuition,—an intuition not only waiting for experience to justify it, but leading towards experience. If I believe in self-healing, I shall after a time find out the way to heal myself—if I have faith in transformation, I can end by laying my hand on and unravelling the whole process of transformation. But if I begin with doubt and go on with more doubt, how far am I likely to go on the journey?" (CWSA 28: 349)

2.

"A persistent faith which no circumstance or event can break. If difficulties occur, they raise not mental doubts or an inert acquiescence, but the firm belief that, with sincere consecration, the Divine Shakti will remove the difficulties, and with this belief a greater turning to her and dependence on her for that purpose. When there is full faith and consecration, there comes also a receptivity to the Force which makes one do the right thing and take the right means and then circumstances adapt themselves and the result is visible.

To arrive at this condition the important thing is a persistent aspiration, call and self-offering, and a will to reject all in oneself or around that stands in the way. Difficulties there will always be at the beginning and for as long a time as is necessary for the change; but they are bound to disappear if they are met by a settled faith, will and patience." (CWSA 29: 234)

3.

"Q: *Doesn't the Divine help if he is not called?*

A: It is not altogether like that.... The divine Consciousness works always, everywhere and in the same way. The divine Grace is active everywhere, and in all circumstances in the same way. And so on. But according to your personal attitude, you create within yourself the conditions for receiving what is done or not receiving it. And trust—indeed, trust in the Truth, trust in the Grace, trust in the divine Knowledge—this puts you in that state of receptivity in which you can receive these things." (CWM 5: 370)

4.

"Even the Godward prayer is not always heard—at once, even as faith is not always justified at once. Both prayer and faith are powers towards realisation which have been given to man to aid him in his struggle—without them,

without aspiration and will and faith (for aspiration is a prayer) it would be difficult for him to get anywhere. But all these things are merely means for setting the Divine Force in action—and it sometimes takes long, very long even, before the forces come into action or at least before they are seen to be in action or bear their result." (CWSA 29: 366)

5.

"And because *sraddha* is the central principle of our existence, any of these things done without *sraddha* is a falsity and has no true meaning or true substance on earth or beyond, no reality, no power to endure or create in life here or after the mortal life in greater regions of our conscious spirit. The soul's faith, not a mere intellectual belief, but its concordant will to know, to see, to believe and to do and be according to its vision and knowledge, is that which determines by its power the measure of our possibilities of becoming, and it is this faith and will turned in all our inner and outer self, nature and action towards all that is highest, most divine, most real and eternal that will enable us to reach the supreme perfection." (CWSA 19: 492)

6.

"One has to suppose that [*the Mother's*] force everywhere around and call it in—if one feels it, so much

the better, but even otherwise if there is faith and power in the call, it can flow in." (CWSA 29: 55)

7.

"Until we know the Truth (not mentally but by experience, by change of consciousness) we need the soul's faith to sustain us and hold on to the Truth—but when we live in the knowledge, this faith is changed into knowledge.

Of course I am speaking of direct spiritual knowledge. Mental knowledge cannot replace faith; so long as there is only mental knowledge, faith is still needed." (CWSA 29: 91)

8.

"If your faith is getting firmer day by day, you are certainly progressing in your sadhana and there can have been no fall. An interruption of definite experiences may be only a period of assimilation in which one prepares for a new range of experience. Keep yourself open and aspire." (CWSA 30: 71)

IV—How Faith Helps in Sadhana

1.

"Q: *What are the highest aims of reason, faith and instinct in ordinary life and in spiritual life?*

Each one has his own aims according to his nature and the goal he wants to attain in ordinary life.

As for spiritual life, it has only one goal: to know the Divine and to unite with Him, by every possible means and with the help of faith, which is certainly the most powerful motive-force for beginners." (CWM 10: 289)

2.

"When one aspires for something, if at the same time one knows that the aspiration will be heard and answered in the best way possible, that establishes a quietude in the being, a quietude in its vibrations; whilst if there is a doubt, an uncertainty, if one does not know what will lead one to the goal or if ever one will reach it or whether there is a way of doing so, and so on, then one gets disturbed and that usually creates a sort of little whirlwind around the being, which prevents it from receiving the real thing. Instead, if one has a quiet faith, if whilst aspiring one knows that there is no aspiration (naturally, sincere aspiration) which remains unanswered, then one

is quiet. One aspires with as much fervour as possible, but does not stand in nervous agitation asking oneself why one does not get immediately what one has asked for. One knows how to wait. I have said somewhere: 'To know how to wait is to put time on one's side.' That is quite true. For if one gets excited, one loses all one's time—one loses one's time, loses one's energy, loses one's movements. To be very quiet, calm, peaceful, with the faith that what is true will take place, and that if one lets it happen, it will happen so much the quicker. Then, in that peace everything goes much better." (CWM 5: 395–396)

"And to that to which they aspire, they attain by faith and right endeavour; for material existence and earthly activities are not the whole scope of our personal becoming or the whole formula of the cosmos." (CWSA 19: 331)

"Two other things have to develop—the feeling of the Divine Presence and power and inspiration behind your actions, and the inner contact with myself and the Mother. Aspire with faith and sincerity and these will come." (CWSA 30: 94)

3.

"It [*surrender*] cannot be absolutely complete in the beginning, but it can be true—if the central will is sincere

and there is the faith and the Bhakti. There may be contrary movements, but these will be unable to stand for long and the imperfection of the surrender in the lower part will not seriously interfere with the power and pervasiveness of the inner attitude." (CWSA 29: 72)

4.

"Yes, of course you are right. The process of surrender is itself a Tapasya. Not only so, but in fact a double process of Tapasya and increasing surrender persists for a long time even when the surrender has fairly well begun. But a time comes when one feels the Presence and the Force constantly and more and more feels that that is doing everything—so that the worst difficulties cannot disturb this sense and personal effort is no longer necessary, hardly even possible. That is the sign of the full surrender of the nature into the hands of the Divine. There are some who take this position in faith even before there is this experience and if the Bhakti and the faith are strong it carries them through till the experience is there. But all cannot take this position from the beginning—and for some it would be dangerous since they might put themselves into the hand of a wrong Force thinking it to be the Divine. For most it is necessary to grow through Tapasya into surrender." (CWSA 29: 82)

5.

"To be able to receive the Divine Power and let it act through you in the things of the outward life, there are three necessary conditions:
1. Quietude, equality—not to be disturbed by anything that happens, to keep the mind still and firm, seeing the play of forces, but itself tranquil.
2. Absolute faith—faith that what is for the best will happen..." (CWSA 29: 266)

6.

"You do the yoga according to your capacity. You have been told: 'Open yourself, you will receive the Force.' You have been told: 'Have faith, be of goodwill and you will be protected.' And indeed you are bathed in the Consciousness, bathed in the Force, bathed in the Protection and to the extent you have faith and open yourself, you receive all that, and it helps you in keeping fit and in rejecting the little inner disturbances and re-establishing order when these come, in protecting yourself against small attacks or accidents which might have happened." (CWM 5: 175–176)

"... if it is of your own choice that you have taken a ring or a portrait, something, and you wear it... if you have the trust, the faith that it protects you, it protects you." (CWM 6: 234)

7.

"It is good to have this unshakable faith—it makes your path easier and shorter." (CWM 14: 79)

8.

"If, besides, you possess sufficient discernment and can see and catch the evil suggestions as they come to you, it becomes all the more easy for you to push them away; but sometimes they come unnoticed, and then it is more difficult to fight them. When that happens, you must sit quiet and call down peace and a deep inner quietness. Hold yourself firm and call with confidence and faith: if your aspiration is pure and steady, you are sure to receive help." (CWM 3: 34)

9.

"The only way to fail in your battle with the hostile forces is not to have a true confidence in the divine help. Sincerity in the aspiration always brings down the required succour. A quiet call, a conviction that in this ascension towards the realisation you are never walking all alone and a faith that whenever help is needed it is there, will lead you through, easily and securely." (CWM 3: 34)

"It is again true that those who have a complete and living faith in the Divine and a perfect sincerity in their

vision of the Divine everywhere and a pure sattwic nature need not trouble themselves about the hostile forces—for from them the forces of the Ignorance fall back and cannot take possession of their nature." (CWSA 28: 462)

10.

"It is faith that makes the men of will and thought persevere in spite of apparently insurmountable difficulties. They start with a strong confidence in the ultimate success of a noble undertaking and are therefore never daunted by difficulties, however formidable. Faith is the one predominating characteristic of all great souls. The vision of faith penetrates into the remote future and turns the impossible into the possible." (CWSA 6: 346)

11.

"The man of faith no doubt is never depressed. His faith is always his stay and support." (CWSA 6: 644)

12.

"Another thing, which is only another name for faith, is selflessness." (CWSA 7: 827)

"The third thing, which is again another name for faith and selflessness, is courage. When you believe in God, when you believe that God is guiding you, believe that God is doing all and that you are doing nothing, what is

there to fear? How can you fear when it is your creed, when it is your religion, to throw yourself away, to throw your money, your body, your life and all that you have, away for others?" (CWSA 7: 828)

13.

"Only the heart that is free from fear, the spirit that is full of faith, the soul that is passionate for realization will remain for the final test and the last purification." (CWSA 7: 1058)

14.

"No great work has ever been done without this essential courage. Misled by egoism, we believe that we are working, that the results of what we do are our creation, and when anything has to be done we ask ourselves whether we have the strength, the means, the requisite qualities, but in reality all work is done by the will of God and when faith in Him is the mainspring of our actions, success is inevitable." (CWSA 7: 937)

15.

"Let us remember the power that led us on. Whatever happens let us have faith and courage—faith that looks beyond all momentary obstacles and reverses and sees the goal that God has set before us, and the courage that never flinches for a moment but moves forward calmly,

wisely, but strongly and irresistibly to that goal." (CWSA 8: 278)

16.

"It [*the effectiveness of namajapa*] depends on the person and how he does it. The Name of the Divine is in itself a power, if it is taken with the right faith and in the right attitude." (CWSA 29: 327)

"The Mother's name called with faith is usually enough to meet it [hostile force]." (CWSA 32: 319–320)

"The experience you had of the power of the Name and the protection is that of everyone who has used it with the same faith and reliance. To those who call from the heart for the protection, it cannot fail." (CWSA 32: 308)

17.

"We have to have the faith that in spite of our ignorance and errors and weaknesses and in spite of the attacks of hostile forces and in spite of any immediate appearance of failure the Divine Will is leading us, through every circumstance, towards the final realisation. This faith will give us equanimity; it is a faith that accepts what happens not definitively but as something that has to be gone through on the way. Once equanimity is established there can be established too another kind of faith,

supported by it, which can be made dynamic with something from the supramental consciousness and can overcome the present circumstances and determine what will happen and help to bring down the realisation of the Will of the Transcendent Divine.

The faith that goes to the Cosmic Divine is limited in the power of its action by the necessities of the play.

To get entirely free from these limitations one must reach the Transcendent Divine." (CWSA 29: 91)

18.

"And then, there is added the vision of the action of Grace, which comes to moderate the results wherever possible, that is to say, wherever it is accepted. And this explains why aspiration, faith, complete trust on the part of the earthly human element, have a harmonising power, because they allow the Grace to come and set right the consequences of this blind resistance [of inertia]." (CWM 10: 232)

19.

"Yes, it is that [*faith that the Mother will enlighten one's mind*] that is the real necessity. It is not possible for the mind to understand fully and rightly till it is filled with the higher Light; but it can feel and believe in the Divine and that the way of the Divine is sure, and this faith itself will bring the first true understanding." (CWSA 31: 53)

20.

"If one has faith and openness, that is enough [*to get the understanding one needs to practise the Yoga*]. Besides there are two kinds of understanding—understanding by the intellect and understanding in the consciousness. It is good to have the former if it is accurate, but it is not indispensable. Understanding by the consciousness comes if there is faith and openness, though it may come only gradually and through steps of experience. But I have seen people without education or intellectuality understand in this way perfectly well the course of the Yoga in themselves, while intellectual men make big mistakes..." (CWSA 31: 53)

21.

"But it is a fact: if nothing, absolutely nothing in you consents to die, you will not die. For someone to die, there is always a second, perhaps the hundredth part of a second when he gives his consent. If there is not this second of consent, he does not die. ...

But usually one gives way, for one must struggle, one must be strong, one must be very courageous and enduring, must have a great faith in the importance of life; like someone, for example, who feels very strongly that he has still something to do and he must absolutely do it." (CWM 5: 137–138)

22.

"X's physical destiny has always been against her but this is a thing that can be cancelled if one can have sufficient faith and inner strength and openness and receive the spiritual force." (CWSA 35: 497)

23.

"Thus the method to be followed in order to overcome the fear of death will differ according to the nature of the case and the state of the consciousness. ...

The third method is for those who have faith in a God, their God, and who have given themselves to him. They belong to him integrally; all the events of their lives are an expression of the divine will and they accept them not merely with calm submission but with gratitude, for they are convinced that whatever happens to them is always for their own good. They have a mystic trust in their God and in their personal relationship with him. They have made an absolute surrender of their will to his and feel his unvarying love and protection, wholly independent of the accidents of life and death. They have the constant experience of lying at the feet of their Beloved in an absolute self-surrender or of being cradled in his arms and enjoying a perfect security. There is no longer any room in their consciousness for fear, anxiety or torment; all that has been replaced by a calm and delightful bliss." (CWM 12: 83–84)

24.

"1. *In what sense is our yoga an adventure?*

It can be called an adventure because it is the first time that a yoga aims at transformation and divinisation of physical life instead of escape from it.

2. *Why is faith so supremely important in yoga?*

Because we are aiming at something quite new that has never been done before.

3. *What is its determining power due to?*

Your faith puts you under the protection of the Supreme who is all-powerful." (CWM 12: 309)

"Above all words, above all thoughts, in the luminous silence of an aspiring faith give yourself totally, unreservedly, absolutely to the Supreme Lord of all existences and He will make of you what He wants you to be.

With love and blessings." (CWM 12: 309–310)

25.

"But even in the most materialistic milieu, if one retains one's aspiration and one's faith in the Divine Life, the sadhana can and should continue." (CWM 14: 44)

26.

"Because, for those who are pure of heart and have an unshakable faith, the worst apparent defeat is only a veiled path leading to final victory." (CWM 10: 309)

27.

"I aspire to infinite force, infinite knowledge, infinite bliss. Can I attain it? Yes, but the nature of infinity is that it has no end. Say not therefore that I attain it. I become it. Only so can man attain God by becoming God.

But before attaining he can enter into relations with him. To enter into relations with God is Yoga, the highest rapture & the noblest utility. There are relations within the compass of the humanity we have developed. These are called prayer, worship, adoration, sacrifice, thought, faith, science, philosophy." (CWSA 12: 5)

28.

"By tireless constancy in effort and faith, we can unite with the Divine Consciousness which is constant and perfect beatitude." (CWM 10: 359)

29.

"Any activity can be taken as part of the sadhana if it is offered to the Divine or done with the consciousness or faith that it is done by the Divine Power." (CWSA 27: 711)

30.

"Faith, *sraddha*, the will to believe and to be, know, live and enact the Truth that we have seen is the principal factor, the indispensable force behind a self-developing action, most of all behind the growth of the soul by works into its full spiritual stature." (CWSA 19: 493)

31.

"Men consecrate their life and works ordinarily to partial powers or aspects of the divine Existence as they see or conceive them—mostly powers and aspects that ensoul to them things prominent in Nature and man or else reflect to them their own humanity in a divine exceeding symbol. If they do this with faith, then their faith is justified; for the Divine accepts whatever symbol, form or conception of himself is present to the mind of the worshipper, *yam yam tanum sraddhaya arcati*, [whatever form he worships with faith] as it is said elsewhere, and meets him according to the faith that is in him. All sincere religious belief and practice is really a seeking after the one supreme and universal Godhead; for he always is the sole master of man's sacrifice and askesis and infinite enjoyer of his effort and aspiration. However small or low the form of the worship, however limited the idea of the godhead, however restricted the giving, the faith, the effort to get behind the veil of one's own ego worship and limitation by material Nature, it yet forms a thread of

connection between the soul of man and the All-soul and there is a response. Still the response, the fruit of the adoration and offering is according to the knowledge, the faith and the work and cannot exceed their limitations, and therefore from the point of view of the greater God-knowledge, which alone gives the entire truth of being and becoming, this inferior offering is not given according to the true and highest law of the sacrifice." (CWSA 19: 332)

32.

"Even as men come to Me, so I accept them. It is my path that men follow from all sides. ... Whatever form the worshipper chooses to worship with faith, I set in him firm faith in it, and with that faith he puts his yearning into his adoration and gets his desire dispensed by me. But limited is that fruit. Those whose sacrifice is to the gods, to elemental spirits, reach the gods, reach the elemental spirits, but those whose sacrifice is to Me, to Me they come." (Gita, IV. 11; VII. 21–23; IX. 25) (CWSA 22: 880)

33.

"But if it is the true psychic love, then faith goes with it, and if there is the entire faith, then the psychic love becomes soon awake." (CWSA 32: 466)

34.

"At the same time, and here we get the gleam of a larger promise which we may even extend to the hope of a collective turn towards perfection,—for if there is hope for man, why should there not be hope for mankind? —the Gita declares that all can if they will, even to the lowest and sinfullest among men, enter into the path of this Yoga. And if there is a true self-surrender and an absolute unegoistic faith in the indwelling Divinity, success is certain in this path." (CWSA 19: 571)

35.

"When you have once found calm, peace of mind, firm faith, equality and been able to live in it for some time, then and only then you may be sure that *suddhi* [purification] is founded; but you must not think it will not be disturbed. It will be, so long as your heart and prana are still capable of responding to the old movements, have still any memory and habit of vibrating to the old chords." (CWSA 36: 230)

"When you have the faith that this will make you progress, is going to purify you, it does you good. If you don't believe in it, it doesn't do much ..." (CWM 7: 62)

36.

"There must be faith in the love & wisdom of God fulfilling Himself through us, fulfilling the Yogasiddhi, fulfilling our

life work, working out all for our good even when it is apparently veiled in evil; and there must be faith in the power of the Shakti manifested by Him in this adhara to sustain, work out and fulfil the divine knowledge, power & joy in the Yoga and in the life. Without sraddha there is no shakti [Shakti is that perfection of the different parts of the system which enables them to their work freely and perfectly. (CWSA 10: 11)]; imperfect sraddha means imperfect shakti. Imperfection may be either in the force of the faith or in its illumination. It is sufficient at first to have full force of the faith, for we cannot from the beginning of the Yoga have full illumination. Then, however we err & stumble, our force of faith will sustain us. When we cannot see, we shall know that God withholds the light, imposing on us error as a step towards knowledge, just as He imposes on us defeat as a step towards victory." (CWSA 10: 13)

37.

"There is also the collectivity formed by individuals who have gathered together around an ideal or a teaching or an action they want to carry out, and who have an organising link between them, the link of the same purpose, the same will and the same faith. These can gather in a methodical manner to practise common prayer and meditation, and if their aim is high, their organisation good, their ideal powerful, through their

prayers or meditations these groups can have a considerable effect on world events or on their own inner development and collective progress. These groups are necessarily far superior to others, but they don't have the blind strength of the mobs, the collective action of the crowd. They replace this vehemence, this intensity by the strength of a deliberate and conscious organisation." (CWM 9: 369–370)

38.

"Never grumble. All sorts of forces enter you when you grumble and they pull you down. Keep smiling. I seem always to be joking but it is not mere joking. It is a confidence born from the psychic. A smile expresses the faith that nothing can stand against the Divine and that everything will come out all right in the end." (CWM 14: 221)

"The best means of routing the enemy is to laugh in his face! You may grapple and tussle for days and he may still show an undiminished vigour; but just once laugh at him and lo! he takes to his heels. A laugh of self-confidence and of faith in the Divine is the most shattering strength possible—it disrupts the enemy's front, spreads havoc in his ranks and carries you triumphantly onwards." (CWM 3: 139)

39.

"The real soul and self of us is hidden from our intelligence by its ignorance of inner things, by a false identification, by an absorption in our outward mechanism of mind, life and body. But if the active soul of man can once draw back from this identification with its natural instruments, if it can see and live in the entire faith of its inner reality, then all is changed to it, life and existence take on another appearance, action a different meaning and character. Our being then becomes no longer this little egoistic creation of Nature, but the largeness of a divine, immortal and spiritual Power." (CWSA 19: 574)

40.

"What I wrote was in answer to your statement about your former idea of the Yoga that if one wanted the Divine, the Divine himself would take up the purifying of the heart and develop the sadhana and give the necessary experiences. I meant to say that it can and does happen in that way if one has trust and confidence in the Divine and the will to surrender. For such a taking up involves one's putting oneself in the hands of the Divine rather than trusting to one's own efforts alone and it implies one's putting one's trust and confidence in the Divine and a progressive self-giving." (CWSA 29: 70)

41.

"Q: I have a strong faith that you are the Divine Incarnate in *bhagavatı tanu*. [Divine body] Am I right?

A: Follow your faith—it is not likely to mislead you." (CWSA 35: 433)

V—The Intensity of Pure Faith Means That the Divine Has Already Chosen the Thing

1.

"Q: *Does it help, if you say, 'I am sure of the result, I know that the Divine will give me what I want'?*

A: You may take it in that way. The very intensity of your faith may mean that the Divine has already chosen that the thing it points to shall be done. An unshakable faith is a sign of the presence of the Divine Will, an evidence of what shall be." (CWM 3: 97)

2.

"This means that if one were to have an absolutely pure faith, untainted by all these things, [ambition, pride, vanity, mental arrogance, vital self-will, personal demand, desire for the petty satisfactions of the lower nature] a true faith, let's say *the* true faith, well, nothing would be impossible. One could be transformed overnight, one could bring down the Supermind in a moment, one could... do anything, one could do anything if one had faith. But it must be a pure faith, it should not be mixed with any personal reactions or any personal will.

A pure faith is something all-powerful and irresistible. One doesn't often find a faith that is all-powerful and irresistible, and this shows that it is not

quite pure. The question should be put like this: each one of us has a faith, for example, a faith in something, say a faith in the divine Presence within us. If our faith were pure, we would at once be aware of this divine Presence within us. This example is very easy to understand. You have faith, it is there, but you don't have the experience. Why? Because the faith is not pure. If the faith were quite pure, immediately, the thing would be done. This is very true. So, when you become aware that the thing is not realised at once, you can begin to look: 'But why isn't it realised? What is there in my faith?' And if you go on looking with the same sincerity, you will find that there are many little things in it, so many little things—not big, as big as this—which are repulsive. Little things. So many times a little conceit comes in, and then a desire, not a very violent one—it doesn't show itself very much. The importance it gives you, the power it will give you and the satisfaction it will give you..." (CWM 15: 320)

3.

"To each his own difficulties seem enormous and radical and even incurable by their continuity and persistence and induce long periods of despondency and crises of despair. To have faith enough or enough psychic sight to react at once or almost at once and prevent these attacks is given hardly to two or three in a hundred. But one ought not to settle down into a fixed idea of one's own

incapacity or allow it to become an obsession; for such an attitude has no true justification and unnecessarily renders the way harder. Where there is a soul that has once become awake, there is surely a capacity within that can outweigh all surface defects and can in the end conquer." (CWSA 29: 40)

VI—Integral Faith, a Faith That Can Move Mountains

1.

"The perception of the exterior consciousness may deny the perception of the psychic. But the psychic has the true knowledge, an intuitive instinctive knowledge. It says, 'I know; I cannot give reasons, but I know.' For its knowledge is not mental, based on experience or proved true. It does not believe after proofs are given: faith is the movement of the soul whose knowledge is spontaneous and direct. Even if the whole world denies and brings forward a thousand proofs to the contrary, still it knows by an inner knowledge, a direct perception that can stand against everything, a perception by identity. The knowledge of the psychic is something which is concrete and tangible, a solid mass. You can also bring it into your mental, your vital and your physical; and then you have an integral faith—a faith which can really move mountains. But nothing in the being must come and say, 'It is not like that', or ask for a test. By the least half belief you spoil matters. How can the Supreme manifest if faith is not integral and immovable? Faith in itself is always unshakable—that is its very nature, for otherwise it is not faith at all. But it may happen that the mind or the vital or the physical does not follow the psychic movement. A man can come to a Yogi and have a sudden

faith that this person will lead him to his goal. He does not know whether the person has knowledge or not. He feels a psychic shock and knows that he has met his master. He does not believe after long mental consideration or seeing many miracles. And this is the only kind of faith worthwhile. You will always miss your destiny if you start arguing. Some people sit down and consider whether the psychic impulse is reasonable or not.

It is not really by what is called blind faith that people are misled. They often say, 'Oh, I have believed in this or that man and he has betrayed me!' But in fact the fault lies not with the man but with the believer: it is some weakness in himself. If he had kept his faith intact he would have changed the man: it is because he did not remain in the same faith-consciousness that he found himself betrayed and did not make the man what he wanted him to be. If he had had integral faith, he would have obliged the man to change. It is always by faith that miracles happen. A person goes to another and has a contact with the Divine Presence; if he can keep this contact pure and sustained, it will oblige the Divine Consciousness to manifest in the most material. But all depends on your own standard and your own sincerity; and the more you are psychically ready the more you are led to the right source, the right master. The psychic and its faith are always sincere, but if in your exterior being

there is insincerity and if you are seeking not spiritual life but personal powers, that can mislead you. It is that and not your faith that misleads you. Pure in itself, faith can get mixed up in the being with low movements and it is then that you are misled." (CWM 3: 152–153)

2.

"Q: *Can mere faith create all, conquer all?*

A: Yes, but it must be an integral faith and it must be absolute. And it must be of the right kind, not merely a force of mental thought or will, but something more and deeper. The will put forth by the mind sets up opposite reactions and creates a resistance. You must have heard something of the method of Coue in healing diseases. He knew some secret of this power and utilised it with considerable effect; but he called it imagination and his method gave the faith he called up too mental a form. Mental faith is not sufficient; it must be completed and enforced by a vital and even a physical faith, a faith of the body. If you can create in yourself an integral force of this kind in all your being, then nothing can resist it; but you must reach down to the most subconscious, you must fix the faith in the very cells of the body." (CWM 3: 36)

3.

"Now, you are speaking of 'dynamic faith'. Dynamic faith is something different. If one has within him faith in the divine grace, that the divine grace is watching over him, and that no matter what happens the divine grace is there, watching over him, one may keep this faith all one's life and always; and with this one can pass through all dangers, face all difficulties, and nothing stirs, for you have the faith and the divine grace is with you. It is an infinitely stronger, more conscious, more lasting force which does not depend upon the conditions of your physical build, does not depend upon anything except the divine grace alone, and hence it leans on the Truth and nothing can shake it. It is very different." (CWM 5: 297)

4.

"It is perhaps more difficult for intellectuals to have faith than for those who are simple, sincere, who are straightforward, without intellectual complications. But I think that if an intellectual person has faith, then that becomes very powerful, a very powerful thing which can truly work miracles." (CWM 6: 121)

"Faith, even an intellectual faith, must always be a worker of miracles, ..." (CWSA 25: 566)

5.

"Let your faith, your sincerity, your purity of aspiration be absolute and pervasive of all the planes and layers of the being; then every disturbing element and distorting influence will progressively fall away from your nature." (CWSA 32: 13)

6.

"People do not know how important is faith, how faith is miracle, creator of miracles. If you expect at every moment to be lifted up and pulled towards the Divine, He will come to lift you and He will be there, quite close, closer, ever closer." (CWM 13: 76)

7.

"But here in Pondicherry we have tried, not to manufacture poets, but to give them birth, a spiritual, not a physical birth into the body. In a number of instances we are supposed to have succeeded ... But how was it done? There are two theories, it seems—one that it was by the Force, the other that it was done by your own splashing, kicking, groaning Herculean efforts. Now, sir, if it is the latter, if you have done that unprecedented thing, made yourself by your own laborious strength into a poet, ... then, sir, why the deuce are you so abject, self-depreciatory, miserable? Don't say that it is only a poet who can produce no more than a few poems in many

months. Even to have done that, to have become a poet at all, a self-made poet is a miracle over which one can only say Sabash! Sabash! without ever stopping. If your effort could do that, what is there that it can't do? All miracles can be effected by it and a giant self-confident faith ought to be in you. On the other hand if, as I aver, it is the Force that has done it, what then can it not do? Here too faith, a giant faith is the only logical conclusion." (CWSA 27: 458–459)

8.

"Don't think that anything is impossible when miracles are being worked out on every side. If you are true to yourself there is nothing to be afraid of. There is nothing unattainable by truth, love and faith. This is your whole gospel which will work out miracles." (CWSA 7: 1036)

9.

"... it is precisely the intuitive reason, speaking oftenest in the present stage of human development through the inspiration that wells up from the heart, which is the basis of faith and exceeds the limits of the logical intellect. For this is the highest form of faith when the intuitive reason speaks to the heart, captures the emotions and is supported by reflection. This is the faith that moves mountains and there is nothing higher and more powerful except the yet deeper inner knowledge." (CWSA 8: 115)

VII—Have Faith That Supramental Life Will Become a Reality

1.

"This is the condition of the earth, and it is not very bright. But for us one possibility remains ... even if, outside, things are deteriorating completely and the catastrophe cannot possibly be avoided, there remains for us, I mean those for whom the supramental life is not a vain dream, those who have faith in its reality and the aspiration to realise it—I don't necessarily mean those who have gathered here in Pondicherry, in the Ashram, but those who have as a link between them the knowledge Sri Aurobindo has given and the will to live according to that knowledge—there remains for them the possibility of intensifying their aspiration, their will, their effort, to gather their energies together and shorten the time for the realisation. There remains for them the possibility of working this miracle—individually and to a small extent collectively—of conquering space, duration, the time needed for this realisation; of replacing time by intensity of effort and going fast enough and far enough in the realisation to liberate themselves from the consequences of the present condition of the world; of making such a concentration of force, strength, light, truth, that by this very realisation they can be above these consequences and secure against them, enjoy the

protection bestowed by the Light and Truth, by Purity—the divine Purity through the inner transformation—and that the storm may pass over the world without being able to destroy this great hope of the near future; that the tempest may not sweep away this beginning of realisation." (CWM 9: 170)

2.

"Only, Sri Aurobindo has said many times that there will be no irrefutable proof of the truth of what he has said and predicted until it is accomplished; only when everything is accomplished will those who refuse to believe be obliged to recognise their mistake—but perhaps they won't be there to do it!

So there is only one thing to do: to proceed on one's way keeping one's own faith and certitude, and to pay no heed to contradictions and denials." (CWM 9: 255)

"Certain prophets in the past have had this apocalyptic vision but, as usual, things were mixed, and they did not have together with their vision of the apocalypse the vision of the supramental world which will come to raise up the part of humanity which consents and to transform this physical world. So, to give hope to those who have been born into it, into this perverted part of human consciousness, they have taught redemption through faith: those who have faith in the sacrifice of the Divine in

Matter will be automatically saved, in another world—by faith alone, without understanding, without intelligence. They have not seen the supramental world nor that the great Sacrifice of the Divine in Matter is the sacrifice of involution which must culminate in the total revelation of the Divine in Matter itself." (CWM 9: 300–301)

3.

"What is indispensable in every case is the *ardent* will for progress, the willing and joyful renunciation of all that hampers the advance: to throw far away from oneself all that prevents one from going forward, and to set out into the unknown with the ardent faith that this is the truth of tomorrow, *inevitable*, which must necessarily come, [manifestation of supramental] which nothing, nobody, no bad will, even that of Nature, can prevent from becoming a reality—perhaps of a not too distant future—a reality which is being worked out now and which those who know how to change, how not to be weighed down by old habits, will *surely* have the good fortune not only to see but to realise." (CWM 9: 159)

"So, the most important thing, it seems, is to remember this fact; even when one doesn't have the tangible experience, to have the certainty of it and faith in it; to remember always, to recall it constantly, to go to sleep with this idea, to wake up with this perception; to do all

that one does with this great truth as the background, as a constant support, this great truth that we are witnessing the birth of a new world." (CWM 9: 160)

"If you wish to belong to the family of the new man, do not imitate pitifully the children of today and yesterday. Be firm and strong and full of faith; fight in order to win, as you say, the great victory. I have trust in you and I count upon you." (CWM 12: 153)

4.

"Q: *What poise or mode should we keep for the supramental descent?*

A: As for poise or mode—that you need not trouble yourself about. An entire faith, opening, self-giving to the Mother are the one condition necessary throughout." (CWSA 32: 157)

5.

"Give us faith in a glorious future and the capacity to realise it." (CWM 15: 216)

6.

"Be quiet. We have only to work patiently without being disturbed by anything and keep unshaken the faith in the inevitable Victory." (CWM 14: 135)

"If we had a truly living faith, an absolute certitude of the almighty power of the Divine, His manifestation could be so evident that the whole earth would be transformed by it." (CWM 14: 80)

"Keep an immutable faith. Truth will triumph." (CWM 14: 80)

VIII—Supramental Knowledge Does Not Need to Be Supported by Faith

1.

"Faith is a necessary means for arriving at realisation because we are ignorant and do not yet know that which we are seeking to realise; faith is indeed knowledge giving the ignorance an intimation of itself previous to its own manifestation, it is the gleam sent before by the yet unrisen Sun. When the Sun shall rise there will be no longer any need of the gleam. The supramental knowledge supports itself, it does not need to be supported by faith; it lives by its own certitude. You may say that farther progression, farther development will need faith. No, for the farther development will proceed on a basis of knowledge, not of Ignorance. We shall walk in the light of knowledge towards its own wider vistas of self-fulfilment." (CWSA 35: 191)

IX—Faith Is Knowledge Within

1.

"Even in worldly things man can do nothing great if he has not faith—in the spiritual realm it is still more indispensable. But this faith depends not on ignorant credulity [ignorant gullibility], but on a light that burns inside though not seen by the eyes of the outward mind, a knowledge within that has not yet taken the form of an outer knowledge." (CWSA 28: 345)

2.

"... faith is indeed knowledge giving the ignorance an intimation of itself previous to its own manifestation, it is the gleam sent before by the yet unrisen Sun. When the Sun shall rise there will be no longer any need of the gleam." (CWSA 28: 272)

3.

"So what's the use of running down faith which after all gives something to hold on to amidst the contradictions of an enigmatic universe? If one can get at a knowledge that knows, it is another matter; but so long as we have only an ignorance that argues, well, there is a place still left for faith—even, faith may be a glint from the knowledge that knows, however far off, and meanwhile

there is not the slightest doubt that it helps to get things done." (CWSA 35: 197)

4.

"On one side there is a secret consciousness within and above which contains in it all potentialities ... of light, peace, power and bliss. On the other side there is another outward on the surface and below that starts from the apparent opposite of unconsciousness, inertia, blind stress, possibility of suffering and grows by receiving into itself higher and higher powers which make it always recreate its manifestation in larger terms, each new-creation of this kind bringing out something of the inner potentiality, making it more and more possible to bring down the Perfection that waits above. ... His true staff of walking is made more of a fire of faith than any ascertained and indubitable light of knowledge." (CWSA 28: 260)

5.

"Do not allow any outward circumstance to shake the faith in you; for nothing gives greater strength than this faith to go through and arrive at the goal. Knowledge and tapasya, whatever their force, have a less sustaining power—faith is the strongest staff for the journey." (CWSA 32: 308)

6.

"You have seized the right principle again, to be all for the Mother and to have full confidence that one has only to go on quietly in that confidence and all will come that needs to come and all be done that the Divine wills to be done. The workings of the world are too subtle and strange and complex for the human mind to understand it—it is only when the knowledge comes from above and one is taken into the higher consciousness that the understanding can come. Meanwhile what one has to follow is the dictates of the deeper psychic heart within based on that faith and love which is the only sure guiding star." (CWSA 29: 88–89)

7.

"I meant a Vedantin who lives in this world with all its suffering and ignorance and ugliness and evil and has had a full measure of these things, betrayal and abandonment by friends, failure of outward objects and desires in life, attack and persecution, accumulated illnesses, constant difficulty, struggles, stumbling in his Yoga. ... He takes them as the nature of this world and the result of the ego-consciousness in which it lives. He tries therefore to grow into another consciousness in which he feels what is behind the outward appearance, and as he grows into that larger consciousness he begins to feel more and more a working behind which is helping

him to grow in the spirit and leading him toward mastery and freedom from ego and ignorance ... Till he reaches this consciousness with its larger knowledge of things, he has to walk by faith and his faith may sometimes fail him, but it returns and carries him through all the difficulties. Everybody is not bound to accept this faith and this consciousness, but there is something great and true behind it for the spiritual life." (CWSA 29: 426)

8.

"Faith first, knowledge afterwards." (CWM 14: 79)

9.

"... we must for the purposes of Yoga have faith in it [spiritual foundation], and we shall then find that our faith is justified by an increasing experience and a greater self-knowledge ... (CWSA 24: 624)

10.

"Q: *Is it good to have a 'blind faith' which neither questions nor reasons?*

A: What men usually call blind faith is in fact what the Divine Grace sometimes gives to those whose intelligence is not developed enough to have true knowledge. So blind faith can be something very respectable, although it

is of course clear that one who has true knowledge is in a far superior position." (CWM 10: 288)

11.

"While we still labour under the stress of the dualities, this perception must no doubt constantly support itself on an act of faith, but a faith which the highest Reason, the widest and most patient reflection do not deny, but rather affirm. This creed is given, indeed, to humanity to support it on its journey, until it arrives at a stage of development when faith will be turned into knowledge and perfect experience and Wisdom will be justified of her works." (CWSA 21: 37)

12.

"But God cannot be deceived and God cannot be conquered by violence. Where He is the Charioteer, victory is certain and if He wheels back, it is only to leave ground which is no longer advantageous to Him and shift the conflict to terrain fixed beforehand for the victory. Often He forces His adversaries to drive Him from ground conquered and occupied in order that they may exhaust their strength on a position never meant to be permanently held and by their very triumph prepare a more decisive overthrow. ... The eye of Faith is not one with the eye of Knowledge;—Faith divines in the large what Knowledge sees distinctly and clearly; but in the

main thing Faith and Knowledge are one and the wisdom of the Lover is justified and supported by the wisdom of the Seer. Faith fights for God, while Knowledge is waiting for fulfilment, and so long as the latter is withheld, the former is necessary. For without indomitable Faith or inspired Wisdom no great cause can conquer." (CWSA 8: 462–463)

13.

"So although we have faith—and who ever did anything great in the world without having faith in his mission or the Truth at work behind him?—we do not found ourselves on faith alone but on a great ground of knowledge which we have been developing and testing all our lives. I think I can say that I have been testing day and night for years upon years more scrupulously than any scientist his theory or his method on the physical plane. That is why I am not alarmed by the aspect of the world around me or disconcerted by the often successful fury of the adverse Forces who increase in their rage as the Light comes nearer and nearer down to the field of earth and Matter." (CWSA 35: 322)

X—Faith in the Grace Always Brings Its Intervention

1.

"Yes, faith in the Grace always brings about its intervention." (CWM 14: 87)

"All the circumstances of life are arranged to teach us that, beyond mind, faith in the Divine Grace gives us the strength to go through all trials, to overcome all weaknesses and find the contact with the Divine Consciousness which gives us not only peace and joy but also physical balance and good health." (CWM 10: 320)

"The Grace and the help are always there for all who aspire for them and their power is limitless when received with faith and confidence." (CWM 14: 87)

"The more complete your faith, sincerity and surrender, the more will grace and protection be with you. And when the grace and protection of the Divine Mother are with you, what is there that can touch you or whom need you fear?" (CWSA 32: 8)

"Continue to have full faith in the Divine's Grace, Will and Action and all will be all right." (CWM 14: 87)

"For the Grace to have a perfect and total result of Its action, the faith must be *total and perfect*." (CWM 17: 289) (CWM 14: 88)

"Have a steady faith in the divine Grace." (CWM 14: 87)

"But for one who has faith in the Divine Grace, the return to the Light becomes easy." (CWM 5: 234)

2.

"In all cases, without exception, whatever may happen, calm and quietude and serene peace and an absolute faith in the divine Grace—if you have all this, nothing can happen to you. And you must have all this if you want to have experiences; because experiences without this—it's not good; but with this, it's excellent." (CWM 7: 82)

3.

"*On my last birthday, your parting words to me were: "Keep your faith." I am still wondering what exactly you meant, dear Mother. What kind of faith would you like me to aspire for?*

Faith in the Divine's Grace and its power to transform you.

Love and blessings to my dear child." (CWM 16: 206)

4.

"The Grace is always there ready to act but you must let it work and not resist its action. The one condition required is faith. When you feel attacked, call for help to Sri Aurobindo and myself. If your call is sincere (that is to say, if you sincerely want to be cured) your call will be answered and the Grace will cure you." (CWM 14: 87)

5.

"Therefore, even if one has no knowledge at all but has trust in the divine Grace, if one has the faith that there is something in the world like the divine Grace, and that this something can answer a prayer, an aspiration, an invocation, then, after making one's mental formation, if one offers it to the Grace and puts one's trust in it, asks it to intervene and has the faith that it will intervene, then indeed one has a chance of success.

Try, and you will surely see the result." (CWM 8: 253–254)

6.

"Q: *With the touch of the divine Grace, how do difficulties become opportunities for progress?*

A: Opportunities for progress? Yes! Well, this is something quite obvious. You have made a big mistake, you are in great difficulty: then, if you have faith, if you

have trust in the divine Grace, if you really rely on It, you will suddenly realise that it is a lesson, that your difficulty or mistake is nothing else but a lesson and that it comes to teach you to find within yourself what needs to be changed, and with this help of the divine Grace you will discover in yourself what has to be changed. And you will change it. And so, from a difficulty you will have made great progress, taken a considerable leap forward. This, indeed, happens all the time. Only, you must be truly sincere, that is, rely on the Grace and let It work in you—not like this: one part of you asking to be helped and another resisting as much as it can, because it doesn't want to change... this is the difficulty." (CWM 6: 242)

"Surely, all this comes to teach us to have a *quiet faith* that what is *truly needed* we shall have and that, for the rest, we must not bother." (CWM 14: 90)

7.

"All my power is with you to help you; open yourself with a calm confidence, have faith in the Divine Grace, and you will overcome all your difficulties." (CWM 16: 182)

8.

"We shall have made a great leap towards realisation when we have driven all defeatism out of our consciousness.

It is by perfecting our faith in the Divine Grace that we shall be able to conquer the defeatism of the subconscient." (CWM 16: 427)

9.

"Here, for each work given, the full strength and Grace are always given at the same time to do the work as it has to be done. If you do not feel the strength and the Grace it proves that there is some mistake in your attitude. The faith is lacking or you have fallen back on old tracks and old creeds and thus you lose all receptivity." (CWM 17: 207)

10.

"The Grace will never fail us—such is the faith we must keep constantly in our heart." (CWM 14: 88)

11.

"An absolute faith and trust in the Grace is, in the last analysis, the Supreme Wisdom." (CWM 14: 89)

12.

"It is when all seems lost that all can be saved. When you have lost confidence in your personal power, then you should have faith in the Divine Grace." (CWM 14: 90)

13.

"Once more, the lack of faith of the human mind brings complications and pain where with a quiet faith in the Divine Guidance all could be very simple and easy.

It is for the growth of this faith and confidence that I am working since so many years.

Obviously the resistance is obstinate." (CWM 17: 259) (CWM 14: 88)

14.

"Through this apparent chaos a new and better order is being formed. But to see it one must have faith in the Divine Grace. Cheer up." (CWM 14: 89)

"*In the present growing conflict what should be our attitude?*

Faith and total confidence in the Divine's Grace." (CWM 14: 89)

"*At the very moment when everything seems to go from bad to worse, it is then that we must make a supreme act of faith and know that the Grace will never fail us.*

I mean, act according to our inner conviction regardless of all consequences and keep our faith unshaken in spite of the apparent so-called proofs to the contrary." (CWM 14: 90)

15.

"Face all these things [*inner disturbances*] quietly and firmly with perseverance in the endeavour of the sadhana. Trust firmly in the Divine Grace and the Divine Grace will not fail you." (CWSA 29: 174)

16.

"Ah! Let us see. We could play a little game like this:

Which part of the being in everyone has a more total faith in the divine Grace?

The psychic.

Ah, no! I am speaking of an experience, I am not speaking of a verbal knowledge. I am speaking... which is the part in everyone of you in which you have the greatest faith in the divine Grace? It can be in the physical, it can be in the vital, it can be in the psychic, and it can be in this part or that, or this activity or that other. There are people, for example, who have absolutely a kind of mental realisation of contact with the Grace, of faith in the Grace; and then, as soon as they are in their vital or physical consciousness, there is nothing any more. There are others, on the contrary, who, even physically, in their body... who perhaps don't have much mental knowledge, but who in their physical consciousness have an absolute faith in the divine Grace,

and a total trust, and they live like that in this faith and trust. Others still have it only in their deep feelings; and their thoughts are vagabond. And there are others who have even a vital faith—these are rare but they exist—who have a vital faith in the divine Grace, that all will always go absolutely well—with a considerable sense of power.

But haven't you ever lent yourself to this little exercise, to see? First, have you faith in the divine Grace?

Yes.

Yes! Good, that's already good. And where then, in which part of your being? Is it in your thought, is it in your feelings, is it in your sensations, is it in your physical activity? If it is everywhere at the same time, you are perfect beings, and I congratulate you.

Sensations.
Sensations? You have a sensation of this? Then you are a very rare person! (Laughter)

No, it is in the feeling.

Ah, the feeling, that's different. Usually it is in the feeling, but there are people who have it first in thought, who have a kind of mental knowledge, and then that's all, it

stops there. And some people have the feeling and don't have the mental experience, their mind is like that...

Can't it be like this, that sometimes one has a feeling in oneself and another time it is the thought?

This is another phenomenon. It means that this faith, this trust in the divine Grace is in the psychic—behind, there, like that, in the psychic, always there. So sometimes it is the feeling, sometimes it is the thought, sometimes even it is the body which is in contact with the psychic, under the influence of the psychic even without knowing it; and at that moment this kind of trust, of faith comes in front like that and supports. This happens when one has momentary contacts with his psychic. For example, when you find yourself in a very great difficulty or a very great physical danger, and suddenly feel this, this force coming into you, the force of a faith, an absolute trust in the divine Grace which helps you. So it means that there is a conscious contact with one's psychic and it comes to help you—it is a special grace bestowed. This is the condition which ought to be the most frequent here, for this contact is established all the time, consciously, deliberately, in everyone. So this instance ought to be the most frequent, it is the most normal—here. That is, according to the part which is active or according to the necessity of the moment, it is here or there or there that

suddenly you feel this trust which takes possession of you and guards you. It is like that.

There we are!" (CWM 7: 114–116)

17.

"If, however, instead of being desires they are aspirations for spiritual things and one continues his line with a regular progress, then one is absolutely sure to obtain one day what he has imagined. The day may be slightly far-off if there are many obstacles on the path, for example if the formation that you have made is still very alien to the state of the earth atmosphere; well, it takes some time to prepare the conditions for its advent. But if it is something which has already been realised several times on earth and does not imply too categorical a transformation, you may have it quite quickly, provided that you follow the same line persistently. And if you add to this the ardour of a faith and trust in the divine Grace and that kind of self-giving to the Grace which makes you expect everything from It, then it can become tremendous; you can see things being realised more and more, and the most surprising ones can be realised one after another. But for this there are conditions to be fulfilled." (CWM 7: 238–239)

18.

"It is the ignorant, limited, egoistic consciousness which demands miracles. As soon as one is enlightened, one knows that everywhere and always there is miracle.

And the more faith one has in this miracle and this Grace, the more capable one becomes of seeing it, or perceiving it constantly at every place where it is. It is ignorance and lack of faith, it is blind egoism which prevents one from seeing." (CWSA 7: 379)

"Keep good faith in the Grace. She is the doer of all miracles." (CWM 14: 91)

19.

"Have faith and unshaken confidence. The Divine Grace will do the rest." (CWM 14: 90)

20.

"It is only by remaining perfectly peaceful and calm with an unshakable confidence and faith in the Divine Grace that you will allow circumstances to be as good as they can be. *The very best happens always* to those who have put their entire trust in the Divine and in the Divine alone." (CWM 14: 94)

21.

"But if you have faith in the Divine's Grace and you implore it full-heartedly, you will succeed more easily." (CWM 15: 72)

22.

"In this year of his centenary, his help will be stronger still. It is up to us to be more open and to know how to take advantage of it. The future is for those who have the soul of a hero. The stronger and more sincere our faith, the more powerful and effective will be the help received." (CWM 13: 17)

23.

"This is not a prayer, but an encouragement.

Here is the encouragement and a comment upon it:

'At the very moment when everything seems to go from bad to worse, it is then that we must make a supreme act of faith and know that the Grace will never fail us.'

The hours before the dawn are always the darkest.

The servitude just before freedom comes is the most painful of all.

But in the heart endowed with faith burns the eternal flame of hope which leaves no room for discouragement." (CWM 15: 177)

"Tell Y to keep her faith intact, whatever pressure may be put upon her to change her mind and attitude. She may have to meet some difficulties, but she must never forget to call on the Divine's Grace with confidence and the protection and help will surely be with her." (CWM 15: 251)

24.

"I do not ask you to believe that the Divine Grace comes to all or that all can succeed in the sadhana or that I personally have succeeded or will succeed in the case of all who come to me. I have asked you if you cannot develop the faith that the Divine is—you seemed often to doubt it,—that the Divine Grace is and has manifested both elsewhere and here, that the sadhana by which so many profit is not a falsehood or a chimaera and that I have helped many and am not utterly powerless—otherwise how could so many progress under our influence? If this is first established, then the doubt and denial, the refusal of faith boils itself down to a refusal of faith in your own spiritual destiny and that of X and some others—does it not?" (CWSA 35: 494)

XI—Walk the Sunlit Path by Complete Faith in the Divine Mother

1.

"It is in fact to ensure an easier path to others hereafter that we have borne that burden. It was with that object that the Mother once prayed to the Divine that whatever difficulties, dangers, sufferings were necessary for the path might be laid on her rather than on others. It has been so far heard that as a result of daily and terrible struggles for years those who put an entire and sincere confidence in her *are* able to follow the sunlit path and even those who cannot, yet when they do put the trust find their path suddenly easy and, if it becomes difficult again, it is only when distrust, revolt, abhiman, or other darknesses come upon them. The sunlit path is not altogether a fable." (CWSA 29: 471–472)

2.

"The Mother is always with you. Put your faith in her, remain quiet within and do with that quietude what has to be done. You will become more and more aware of her constant Presence, will feel her action behind yours and the burden of your work will no longer be heavy on you." (CWSA32: 28)

3.

"But whether the progress is rapid or slow, the attitude should always be an entire faith and reliance on the Mother; just as you do not think that the progress was the result of your own effort or merit, but of your taking the right attitude of reliance and the Mother's force working, ..." (CWSA 32: 199)

4.

"Is it so difficult to have faith and confidence in the Mother? Even with a little of that attitude, the descent was taking place in you." (CWSA 32: 212)

5.

"One has to cleave firmly to the faith in the Mother's working behind all appearances and you will find that that will carry you through." (CWSA 31: 182)

6.

"Put your faith in the Divine Shakti, set your mind at rest and let the Mother's Force work." (CWSA 32: 212)

7.

"The Mother's force is there always and can help you to get rid of these things, but you on your part must with faith and sincerity accept the Mother and put yourself

entirely on her side so as to make it possible for the Force to work with effect." (CWSA 32: 227)

8.

"Q: *I ask because I do not understand how, without invoking the Mother, he gets her Force.*

A: Have you not put him by the photograph and his letter in connection with us? Has he not turned in this direction? Has he not met Y and been impressed by him—a third channel of contact? That is quite sufficient to help him to a contact if he has the faith and the Yogic stress in him." (CWSA 32: 239)

9.

"These things that come to frighten you are merely impressions thrown on you by small vital forces which want to prevent you (by making you nervous) pushing on in sadhana. They can really do nothing to you, only you must reject all fear. Keep always this thought when these things come: 'The Mother's protection is with me, nothing bad can happen'; for when there is the psychic opening and one puts one's faith in the Mother, that is sufficient to ward these things off." (CWSA 32: 306–307)

10.

"There are some of course who by their openness and their faith get her help in any worldly difficulty or trouble

but that is a different thing. They simply remember or call the Mother and in due time some result comes." (CWSA 32: 325)

11.

"X progressed smoothly and rapidly from the beginning in Yoga, first, because he was in dead earnest; secondly, because he had a clear and solid mind and a strong and tenacious will in complete control of the nerves; thirdly, because his vital being was calm, strong and solid; finally, and chiefly, because he had a complete faith and devotion to the Mother." (CWSA 32: 338)

12.

"If people want to understand why the Mother does things, let them get into the same inner consciousness from which she sees and acts. As to what she is, that also can only be seen either with the eye of faith or of a deeper vision. That too is the reason why we keep here people who have not yet acquired the necessary faith or vision; we leave them to acquire it from within as they will do if their will of sadhana is sincere." (CWSA 32: 381)

13.

"Q: *Those who cannot reject their lower nature fully are made to suffer at the hands of the hostile forces and get wounded by them. What is the best means for them to go forward?*

A: Faith in the Mother and complete surrender." (CWSA 32: 620)

14.

"The vital defects and difficulties are the same in all and also the shortcomings of the mind. One has to open in faith and confidence to the Divine; the Mother's Force will gradually put everything right." (CWSA 32: 218)

15.

"The more the faith, the more rapid the result is likely to be. For the rest one must not depend on one's own efforts only, but succeed in establishing a contact with the Divine and a receptivity to the Mother's Power and Presence." (CWSA 32: 217)

16.

"Q: *Why am I suffering? Why am I so far from the Mother? How can I get over this?*

A: Reject the suffering. Reject every vital movement that would take you away from the Mother.

Cling close to her always with your inner being—without demand or question, in perfect faith." (CWSA 32: 475)

17.

"You must put your trust in the Mother and let her Force work in you—keep the attitude of confidence and self-offering and the result will appear as soon as the consciousness is ready." (CWSA 30: 33)

18.

"It is very satisfying to have closed so well the work you undertook for the Mother, overcoming all difficulties and ending in such a satisfactory result. But your work for the Mother is always sure to be the same, thorough, conscientious and skilful and inspired by a firm faith and openness to her force; where these things are, success is always sure." (CWSA 32: 414)

19.

"... for here trust in the Mother, faith in her divine Love is of great importance; anything that denies or disturbs it opens the door to obstacles and wrong reactions." (CWSA 32: 548)

20.

"There are no conditions for receiving the influence of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother except faith, an entire sincerity in following the spiritual path and a will and capacity to open oneself to the influence; but this capacity usually comes as the result of sincerity and faith." (CWSA 32: 106)

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