
Faith and Existence:

Suna Senman-Lane

As we begin a new year with resolutions for new beginnings, let's reflect upon the deep beliefs that drive us in our lives. We need basic beliefs in order to make daily decisions. These beliefs are like postulates in math, undisputed assumptions that we rely on to be absolute, unchanging and eternal. When we know that these "postulates" remain consistent, we let go of the energy of worry that would come if we had to police changing variables. Our beliefs free us up from the energy that we would have to invest into maintaining stability, thus allowing us the freedom to place our energies into dreaming, planning and building or simply enjoying what we have. Let's look at some belief postulates that most people have. Most people accept the belief that gravity is absolute, unchanging and eternal (and consistent with other calculative laws of physics). We have faith that when we walk out the door of our homes gravity will pull our feet to the ground and we don't have to worry about floating into outer space like a helium balloon. We also believe that the earth rotates regularly, thus allowing our portion of the earth its time to receive the sun rays that sustain life.

Prior to September 2001, most Americans held a belief that our country was safe from the threat of acts of war. Since 9/11 our belief has changed. Terrorism is a concept concerning most people more today than before then. Yet, what are the real facts of the threat of terrorism. While our belief was that we are safe on Sept 10, the reality was that a threat was lurking. (There were many people who had premonitions of the attack, yet as a collective nation, we were unaware.) What has changed in our beliefs and what has changed in our reality since that time?

I remember a story I read that addresses the dynamic of belief and reality. For me, it empowered my faith in the harmony of people and the unseen universal principles that manifest security. This faith is similar to the "visualization" techniques that athletes use to help them achieve great feats. We make decisions upon what we believe, consciously and unconsciously. Without fully understanding in our verbal, logical part of our brain, our being finds a way to break the time record for a marathon or jump a greater height than any person has done before. There is a dynamic occurring between belief and the manifestation of reality that eludes our linear thinking. The story I read is easily accessible to anyone. It comes from the most published and read book in all history, the Bible. People of many faiths and philosophies study this book with different approaches. As I represent a nonreligious, educational foundation, I present the story as an instrument for greater understanding. The story is found in 1 Samuel 8, title "Israel asks for a King".

I leave it up to you to read the story. I will simply express what the story taught me. Prior to the story of 1 Samuel 8 are accounts of how the meager Israeli army had defeated the much larger and more powerful armies with the assistance of timely acts of nature. This reminded me of the experiences that the meager colonial militia had opposing the Royal British Forces a couple of centuries ago. I reflect upon how those experiences relate to us in America and the world today. I experienced the story of 1 Samuel 8 as a lesson in faith and belief in the true postulates of life. There a certain elements which are absolute, unchanging and eternal. When we try to manipulate reality in the absence of faith in those elements and give priority to other elements, we become susceptible to the "side effects" of those other elements. Therefore, it is important to take notice of what we truly believe and act faithfully.

Relating to our current concern of terrorism, we need to look at our belief about human nature. We can create and put into place many regulations that appear to protect us. Yet, we know with every idea we come up with about a threat and a preventative measure against that threat, there are people who will think of several ways to get around those measures of protection. The pursuit of logic alone is infinite. We have to look at deeper belief postulates. Science tells us that organic beings have an innate drive to preserve the species. Human beings are no exception. Human beings are unique to the rest of the organic world in that we have abilities to affect the entire earth ecosystem based on our desires and actions. We also have the most complex physical, mental, emotional and spiritual aspects of our being. If we coordinate the greater understanding of all the disciplines of science (Math, physics, psychology, sociology, etc...), the conclusion of the sciences could be the conclusion of the greater understanding of all the world's philosophies. The conclusion would be that people want to experience joy, meaning and fulfillment and make efforts to the best of their ability to attain that. There is a relationship between the faith of humans and the reality of the world.

As I counsel young people (I am a psychotherapist by profession.), I help them out of their confusion (causing anxiety and depression) by asking them to visualize their desired future, evaluate their beliefs and to create good habits that could manifest that future. All of us need to visualize our desired future, evaluate our beliefs and direct ourselves with faith. When we lose sight of this larger perspective of our lives, we can get confused by the detailed perspective. To me, the story of 1 Samuel 8 asked me to look inside and outside at the elements of absolute, unchanging and eternal qualities and to have faith in those things. That faith frees me up from a lot of worry and gives me the ability to move out the front door of my home without worrying that I'll float into space like a helium balloon. That faith gives me the ability to step forward towards my goals, and I have BIG goals! (I share the goals of the World Foundation for Original Human Development, to bring peace in the world through the collection of healthy individuals.) That faith gets me out of bed when I feel nearly defeated by multiple challenging situations and conduct a program or plan a new program, etc. When I look outside and see the consistencies of nature and look inside and notice the consistency of my desire, I find the faith that drives me. With this faith and the faith of all of us individually and in our groups we create the historical foundation for a better future in this moment.

Thank you for your faith and existence.