

## THE CHARACTERISTICS OF FAITH

### When the Belief Blooms

**Everybody** aspires to achieve good fortune and happiness. Everybody looks forward to success and well-being. Every human being has his own idea of success and well-being. Somebody, thinks that success means affluence and acquisition of a lot of material wealth. Somebody else may consider the attainment of high offices as a mark of success. Others may consider the achievement of power and rule as the pinnacle of success. But some worshippers of Allah transcend all these material goals and look beyond this world. In the eyes of such believers, the assets and acquisitions of this lowly world have no value. One among such persons was *Syedna* Bilal the Ethiopian. He was the man, who by renouncing all the material wealth, glory and the status preferred his faith, as, the source of all his happiness and success. He declared his faith and stuck to it steadfastly in the face of extreme hardship and persecution so much, so that, he became a model of steadfastness in history. He was a slave who became a believer and follower of the *Messenger of Allah* (*sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and thereby exposed himself to the persecution and penalization on the part of the pagans of Makkah. He was forced to lie naked on the burning sand of noon-time at Makkah and lashed mercilessly, for embracing the faith of Muhammad till he is bloodied. But he goes on denying the divinity of their idols of Lat, Uzza and Habal; he keeps on refuting the subjection of man to man; and prefers the gains of the Other World over the penury of this world. He sums up his thoughts in one slogan: “*Ahad, Ahad*” [God is one, God is one]. Hearing it, his enemies, become desperate and to hide their helplessness put a heavy stone on the chest of Bilal to force him to surrender. But, Bilal kept firm, on his stand and ultimately, the truth triumphed over falsehood.

**Another** person who made the faith the source of all success and happiness was Imam Ibn Taimiyyah. When he declared that real success is implied in the attainment of the blessing of belief, he antagonized the holders of the contrary conceptions of success, who resorted to persecuting and oppressing him to force him to give up his viewpoint. He replied to his detractors, that, you cannot do anything, against me, because my heaven is located in my heart. You cannot dislodge me from it. You can exile me if you so wish, but then I will think that I have embarked upon tourism. You can imprison me, if you want but then I will

think that I have been provided with privacy to invoke my God. And if you kill me this will be martyrdom for me. Remember that my chest is the treasure of the Book of Allah and my heart is the reservoir of the tradition of His Messenger. You can never snatch my success from me. A poet has very rightfully said:

It makes one's heart void of love of worlds

### **What a thing is the taste of belief!.**

**The** savour of belief can be realized by only those who have tasted it. The *Messenger of Allah (sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam)* has pronounced:

«ذَاقَ طَعْمَ الْإِيمَانِ مَنْ رَضِيَ بِاللَّهِ رَبًّا، وَبِالْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا، وَبِمُحَمَّدٍ رَسُولًا» (مسلم).

(Translation of meaning) “Those who accepted Allah as their Creator, Islam as their religion and Muhammad as their messenger are the savourers of the taste of belief” (Muslim). According to another tradition, the *Messenger of Allah (sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam)* said:

ثَلَاثٌ مَنْ كُنَّ فِيهِ وَجَدَ حَلَاوَةَ الْإِيمَانِ: أَنْ يَكُونَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِمَّا سِوَاهُمَا، وَأَنْ يُحِبَّ الْمَرْءَ لَا يُحِبُّهُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ، وَأَنْ يَكْرَهُ أَنْ يَعُودَ فِي الْكُفْرِ كَمَا يَكْرَهُ أَنْ يَقْدَفَ فِي النَّارِ " (متفق عليه)

(Translation of meaning) Anybody who possesses three things in himself has found the sweetness of belief: That Allah and His Messenger be more lovable to him than all other things; that whatever he does, he does only for the pleasure of Allah; and that his return to disbelief is more unlikeable for him than his being thrown into fire.” (Al-Bukhari, Muslim)

**Some** of our elders have observed about their opponents, that, if they come to know of the nature of belief in our inner selves, they would be ready to fight us for this. Those who want success and contentment in this world, ought to espouse belief. Those who aspire for the success of Hereafter, should consolidate their belief; and those who want peace and well-being, should submerge themselves in belief.

### **DESCRIPTION OF IMAN:**

**What** is the meaning of belief [*Iman*]? It means to attest, to affirm, to uphold as true. This is corroborated by the story of Yousf as narrated in the holy Quran. When Yousuf's brother came weeping to their father Yaqob and told him, that, Yousuf was taken away by a wolf and presented him with a blood stained shirt

but in their hearts they were not sure that their father will believe it. This situation is narrated in the Quran thus:

﴿ قَالُوا يَتَابَنَا إِنَّا زَهَبْنَا فَسْتَبِقُ وَتَرَكْنَا يُوسُفَ عِنْدَ مَتَاعِنَا فَأَكَلَهُ الذِّئْبُ وَمَا أَنْتَ بِمُؤْمِنٍ لَنَا وَلَوْ كُنَّا صَادِقِينَ ﴾ **يوسف: ١٧**

(Translation of meaning) *Saying: O our father! We went racing one with another, and left Joseph by our things, and the wolf devoured him, and thou believest not our saying even when we speak the truth.*”(Yusuf:17).

**As** a term of the Shariat *Iman* means that man affirm something by the word of mouth; believe it as true in his inner self; and act upon its dictates by the organs of his body.

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