

Certainty – *Yaqīn*

In attempting to create this format of questions and answers and according to the guidance of the Imām of the time through his Farmans primary sources have been used such as Farmans, Ayat's of the Qur'an, Imam's Speech's, Ginans/Qasidas, Hadith, Ta'wili esoteric work of Ismaili Hujjats, Pir's and Dai's. The special related Farman is of 1960 made in Karachi, Pakistan 27 September.

Q1. What should we know about *Yaqīn* that is certainty in our faith or religion?

A1. *Yaqīn* is an Arabic word meaning certainty and is mentioned in the Qur'ān 8 times. Unlike belief (*Imān*) which is both common and special, certainty is special only and in which there is no doubt. It is also important to note that common belief is called blind faith (2:18, 13:16, 17:72, 20:124-125, 22:46) in which there can be doubt whereas special is related to knowledge and wisdom to one's faith where doubt ceases to exist.

Q2. Is the word *Yaqīn* related to anything else in the Qur'ān?

A2. *Muqīnīn* (6:75). The people who have achieved absolute certainty of their own soul's that is the Prophets, Imāms and true mu'mins. The *ḥadīth* of Mawlā^c Alī "He who recognises himself recognises God" is related to these special souls. In short this is the purpose of every soul that has come on to this earth. Mawlana Sultan Muhammad (s.a) in his "Usul-i Dīn" Farman gives an example "that when rain pours onto the earth it gathers, drop by drop, to form a river, which finally merges into the sea. All rain water eventually reaches the sea once again. The same is true for the soul. The soul too has an abode and the abode of the soul is infinite." The Imām later on explains that the inner significance of faith is to recognise one's status with certainty.

Q3. How can one understand *Yaqīn* through examples?

A3. On a physical level through God's creation they can be visual things such as the Sun, moon, oceans, rain, earth, flowers and living things etc. of which we have no doubt about their existence but remember they are limited in time and are temporary and so will not be there forever meaning that these are only examples or symbols of *yaqīn*. On a spiritual level it is the existence of the soul and intellect which are eternal and termed as the symbolised. The examples mentioned above in the Qur'ān has a deep inner meaning of the reality or the origin of existence that is the *ḥaqīqat* (reality-the state of things as they actually exist). Mawla further in the "Usul-i Dīn" Farman says: "That man who is not given to deep thinking, and who does not have the high ambition to rise high, is like a rain drop which has evaporated from the surface of the earth. The man, who has aspiration to a higher realm, practices more and more ^c*ibādat* and also cultivates love in his heart." Here *ibādat* are of two types, first ^c*ibādat* of knowledge (intellect) then ^c*ibādat* of the soul (prayers).

Q4. What are the conditions to understand and realise this reality?

A4. The basic conditions are true and absolute obedience to the Imām of the time which consists of knowledge and action that is religious knowledge and good deeds. Religious knowledge is meant the knowledge of certainty (^c*ilmu'l-yaqīn*), by which all doubts and suspicions are removed either knowingly or unknowingly regarding our faith and its

guide, also one needs to know that this reality is related to acquiring knowledge every day. A good example is just as a lamp remains lit by means of the continuation of its wick and the constant flow of a certain quantity of oil to it and is extinguished if they cease, the lamp of our life also remains lit by the continuation of the oil of words meaning knowledge and the wick of deeds and progress has stages.

From the above it is important to realise that the opposite of wise is an ignorant soul. Mawla in the “Usul-i Dīn” Farman says regarding happiness: “How can the ignorant be ever happy? He cannot grasp the *ḥaqīqat*, he does not want the *ḥaqīqat*, the ignorant one lets go of the *ḥaqīqat*. But the one who is fond of the *ḥaqīqat* follows a different route altogether, like Jesus, Pir Sadardin, Naṣīr Khusraw, Pir Shams and Mawlāna Rumi..”

Q5. What are these stages of progress?

A5. First is correct and firm belief, the second is knowledge of certainty (*‘ilmu’l-yaqīn-102:5*), the third is the vision or the eye of certainty (*‘aynu’l-yaqīn-102:7*) and the fourth and last is the truth of certainty (*ḥaqqu’l-yaqīn-56:95*). These stages are also related to the paths of religion *sharī‘at*, *ṭarīqat*, *ḥaqīqat* and *ma‘rifat*.

Q6. What is firm belief?

A6. In the Book of healing it says firm belief, in fact, is another name of the initial and basic faith (*imān*), which gradually progresses and becomes the light of faith, it should also be remembered that faith is called certainty when it reaches the level of knowledge, such as, knowledge of certainty, the eye of certainty and the truth of certainty. Further, certainty becomes recognition (*ma‘rifat*), when the eye of the heart opens. Therefore the paths mentioned in Q5 can be understood as “*Sharī‘at* is my words, *ṭarīqat* is my actions, *ḥaqīqat* is my states and *ma‘rifat* is my secret”.

Q7. In Q2 blind faith was mentioned. Can this be further explained?

A7. a. The fundamentals of religion start with belief (*aqīdah*) of something that is above one’s understanding as in the time of the Holy Prophet who brought the message of God.

b. This started with accepting the holy sayings and related traditions of God, the Prophet and the custodian of the Divine command (*Imām*). Only a person with a firm belief can progress on the path of religion that is through true love and obedience.

c. The next step is perfecting one’s faith and that can only be done through knowledge, wisdom and good deeds. For this God has provided the Farmans of the light of the *Imām* and the Qur’ān through which one needs to engage one’s intellect, which the *Imām* has said so many times. Mawlana Sultan Muhammad (s.a.) in his “Platinum Jubilee” quote of 20th February 1955 said that “long familiarity with these teachings some of you forget the necessity of re-examination of your heart and religious experience.”

Q8. Is there a Qur’ānic reference on the above to better understand Imāms Farmāns.

A8. In verse 4:136 God says: “O you who believe! believe in Allah and His messenger”. The first “believe” is relating to firm faith or blind faith and the following is the

perfection of faith by studying not only the exoteric but esoteric meaning. *Imām* in his Farmān of 22nd November 1967 quite clearly says the esoteric or inner meaning is only for the Jama'at.

The wise Qur'an in verse (2:18) says about the disbelievers: "They are deaf, dumb and blind; so they do not return." Are they in this condition physically or spiritually? In verse (7:179), God says: "They have hearts but do not understand with them, they have eyes but they do not see with them, they have ears but they do not hear with them. They are like cattle, nay even worse than them". This verse shows that they are spiritually deaf, dumb and blind, not physically.

It should be understood that there are two stages of faith. The first stage is imperfect faith or firm belief which is essential but it is the second stage of understanding one's faith through the use of the intellect that one can say I have certainty of my faith, my religion, my love for the Imām etc.

- Q9. What does *Imām* mean in the Farman that the esoteric is only for the Jama'at?
- A9. The Qur'ān is filled with the secrets of the light of *Imāmat* meaning the stages of the perfection of faith. In the book "Du'ā the essence of 'ibadat" relating to *sūrah of Fātihah* also known as *Ummu'l-Kātab* (mother of the Book) meaning the origin of the Book, in it is explained that God has hidden His signs, proofs, indications in His manifest Light (*Imām*) and by studying the Qur'ān in the light or guidance of the Imām can one have any success.
- Q10. Has the Imām mentioned in connection with certainty the importance of understanding faith with the use of intellect in his recent Farmans?
- A10. Mubarak Farman made in Canada Toronto 17 November 2017 where He says "...Our good fortune is that our faith is the faith of the intellect in the sense that the practice of our faith tells us to learn more about Allah's creation." Later on he emphasises the values of faith "faith being the fundamental of human life... ."