



Faith is Yamān and wisdom is Yamāniyyah

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Faith is Yamān and wisdom is Yamāniyyah; and I find the breath of the Most Merciful from the direction of Yemen. Indeed disbelief, wrongdoing, and harsh hearts are found amongst those with loud obnoxious voices who raise goats and camels."

[Authentic hadith] [At-Tabaraani - Narrated by Ahmad]

As the adjective Yamān / Yamāniyyah could refer to Yamīn which means the right side or to Yemen as a country. Scholars held different opinions on the meaning of the statement: "Faith is Yamān and wisdom is Yamāniyyah." Some said that the statement ascribes faith to Makkah, because the beginning of Yamīn is from there, and Makkah is Yamāniyyah compared with Madīnah. Some said that this statement ascribes faith to both Makkah and Madīnah because both are to the right side compared with the Levant. This is based upon the fact that the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) mentioned this statement while he was in Tabūk. It was also mentioned that this describes the Ansār, because they were originally from Yemen, and faith was ascribed to them because they were the basis of support for Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). However, there is nothing wrong with interpreting the Hadīth based on its apparent meaning, which will mean that the people of Yemen are better than other people from the East. The reason for that is their submission to faith without costing Muslims much hardship, compared with people of the East and others. If someone has a specific quality, and is strong in implementing it, then this quality can be ascribed to him as a sign of his perfection in it. However, this does not mean negation of faith from others. In addition, this refers only to those who were present amongst them at that time, and not to all the people of Yemen at all times, because the wording used does not indicate this. "Wisdom" here means knowledge that comprises awareness of Allah, the Exalted. "I find the breath of the Most Merciful from the direction of Yemen", i.e. he was in distress, hardship, and grief from the people of Makkah, but Allah granted him relief through the Ansār. This means that he received relief from the Ansār, who were originally from Yemen. Hence, this Hadīth cannot be considered one of the Hadīths that refer to Allah's attributes (as the word breath is not one of Allah's attributes). "Indeed disbelief, wrongdoing, and harsh hearts are found amongst those with loud obnoxious voices who raise goats and camels," i.e. disbelief, wrongdoing, and cruelty of the heart are rampant amongst those who have too much wealth and camels and raise their voices while farming or with their animals, and therefore they are usually proudly arrogant and ungrateful.

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