

Some Answered Questions, Faith and Works

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Translated. Original Persian



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Faith and Works

Question: It is said in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas: "...whoso is deprived thereof, hath gone astray, though he be the author of every righteous deed". What is the meaning of this verse?

Answer: The meaning of this blessed verse is that the foundation of success and salvation is the recognition of God, and that good deeds, which are the fruit of faith, derive from this recognition.

When this recognition is not attained, man remains veiled from God and, as he is veiled, his good works fail to achieve their full and desired effect. This verse does not mean that those who are veiled from God are all equal, whether they be doers of good or workers of iniquity. It means only that the foundation is the recognition of God and that good deeds derive from this knowledge. Nevertheless, it is certain that among those who are veiled from God there is a difference between the doer of good and the sinner and malefactor. For the veiled soul who is endowed with good character and conduct merits the forgiveness of God, while the veiled sinner possessed of bad character and conduct will be deprived of the bounties and bestowals of God. Herein lies the difference.

This blessed verse means, therefore, that good deeds alone, without the recognition of God, cannot lead to eternal redemption, to everlasting success and salvation, and to admittance into the Kingdom of God.

