

Faith is a discovery

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

In the chapter entitled Al-Ma'idah (The Table) of the Quran, the story is told of a group who came to the Prophet and accepted him as a prophet: "When they listen to what has been sent down to the Messenger, you see their eyes overflowing with tears, because of the Truth they realised. They say, Our Lord, we believe, so count us among those who bear witness" (5:83).

According to this verse, these people accepted the Prophet's faith. But their acceptance was not of a simple kind: it was the outcome of *marifah*, that is, the realisation of the truth.

What is realisation or discovery? It is the result of deep contemplation. When anyone ponders over nature and thinks about himself, he discovers that there is a great mind behind this creation. His study, his observation and contemplation, all lead him to believe that there is this great re-

ality. After this realisation, he feels that he has no option but to proclaim the existence of God.

The next step is to aver there is no God but the one God. This declaration inevitably follows surrender before God. One who makes such a declaration not only accepts the truth but he becomes a worshipper of God and a follower of God's guidance. His thinking, his speech, his behaviour are all coloured in the dye of God. He adopts a God-oriented life. This faith, or *iman*, revolutionises one's thinking. It brings about a sea-change in one's life. Faith is like a seed. A seed is a growing thing. It grows and grows till it becomes a big tree, with roots and a trunk and branches and leaves and flowers and fruits. All these are potential parts of the seed. A tree is an actualization of a seed's potential.

www.cpsglobal.org