

No trace of having travelled was to be seen upon him, nor did any of us know him. So he came and sat down with the Prophet *sall Allaahu 'alaihi wa sallam* and put his knees against his knees, and placed his hands upon his thighs¹ and said:

“O Muhammad, inform me about Islaam.”

The Shaykh Saalih al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* mentions in his explanation:

Q1. That the man who came to the Prophet *sall Allaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*:

- a) did not seem to have travelled from another city
- b) had an appearance which caused some confusion to the Companions²
- c) was not recognised by the Companions who were sitting there
- d) was the greatest of Allaah's creation

Answers: a) b) c

Q2. That when the man approached the Prophet *sall Allaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*:

- a) he sat down immediately behind him *sall Allaahu 'alaihi wa sallam* out of respect³

¹ Shaykh Muhammad Amaan al Jaami *rahimahullaah* mentions in his explanation of Thalaathat ul Usool:

So all of this was out of kindness and friendliness towards the Messenger of Allaah *sall Allaahu alaihi wa sallam* because in reality, he (Jibreel) was the teacher, even if he sat in the manner of the student; however in reality he (Jibreel) was the teacher. For this reason he placed his hands on the thighs of the Messenger of Allaah *sall Allaahu alaihi wa sallam*.

² Shaykh al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

No signs of having travelled could be seen upon him, and none of us knew him – meaning (none) of those present.

So, this was something amazing – that he had not arrived from a journey such that it could be said, “He is from other than the people of al Madeenah” – and yet they did not recognise him and he was not from the people of the city such that they would recognise him. So, they were, therefore, confused about him.

³ Shaykh al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

So he sat down with the Prophet *sall Allaahu alaihi wa sallam*...
(meaning) in front of him, with the sitting of a student with his teacher

And put his knees against his knees...

Meaning: he was very close to him

And he placed his hands upon his thighs...

Meaning: the thighs of the Prophet *sall Allaahu alaihi wa sallam*

- b) he sat down very close to the Prophet *sall Allaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*
- c) he called him "Muhammad" because he did not know that he was the Messenger ⁴
- d) his manner may have led the people to think he was from the Bedouins

Answers: b) d)

⁴ Shaykh al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

So he said, "O Muhammad"

*He addressed him by name and he did not say, "O Messenger of Allaah"; and perhaps he 'alaihissalaam did that in order that the Companions should think that he were a person from the Bedouins because it was from the custom of the people of the desert that when they used to address the Prophet *sall Allaahu alaihi wa sallam*, they would do so by his name; for the people of the desert have their own nature and their own customs. And also (this method of the addressing the Prophet *sall Allaahu alaihi wa sallam* by name) was an additional means of rendering (the matter) strange and obscure so that they would not recognise him.*

So Allaah's Messenger *sall Allaahu 'alaihi wa sallam* said:

“Islaam is that you testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah, establish the prayer, pay the Zakaat, fast in Ramadaan, and perform pilgrimage (Hajj) to the House if you are able to do so.”

He said, “You have spoken the truth.”⁵

So we were amazed at him asking him a question and then saying that he had spoken the truth.

The Shaykh Saalih al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* mentions in his explanation:

Q1. That the matters mentioned by the Prophet *sall Allaahu 'alaihi wa sallam* here:

- a) are the pillars of Islaam
- b) must be implemented by the person who claims Islaam for himself⁶
- c) in Arabic, are known as the *nawaaqid ul islaam*
- d) are the only acts of worship in Islaam⁷

⁵ Shaykh Muhammad Amaan al Jaami *rahimahullaah* mentions in his explanation of Thalaathat ul Usool:

How amazing! You ask then you declare that (he) has spoken the truth?

The Companions said, “So we were amazed at him asking him a question and saying that he had spoken the truth.” It is assumed that when the teacher replies, the person who asks (then) says to him, “*Jazaak Allaahu khair! Ahsan Allaahu ilayk!*”

So when he said he had spoken the truth, saying to him, “*You have spoken the truth*”, the Companions were amazed at this behaviour.

⁶ Shaykh al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

*The Prophet *sall Allaahu 'alaihi wa sallam* mentioned to him the pillars of Islaam which are essential and which are such that if they are implemented then Islaam is brought about.*

⁷ Shaykh al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

And whatever is addition to them (the pillars of Islaam) from the other matters (of worship) then they are matters of completion.

Answers: a) b)

Q2. That the Prophet sall Allaahu 'alaihi wa sallam only mentioned these five matters:

- a) because he knew that the questioner was weak in *eemaan*
- b) and they are the *arkan* of Islaam
- c) and this made matters easy for the people who were listening ⁸
- d) because there are no other obligations in the religion ⁹

Answers: b) c)

Q3. That when the questioner replied, "You have spoken the truth" then this:

- a) showed that the questioner was someone with knowledge
- b) showed that the questioner was overconfident in his own knowledge
- c) surprised the Companions who were listening ¹⁰
- d) showed that the questioner and the one being questioned were one and the same person

Answer: a) c)

⁸ Shaykh al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

So the Prophet sall Allaahu 'alaihi wa sallam limited himself to an explanation of the pillars of Islaam since the shorter an answer is then the easier it will be for the student and for the listener, and it will be easy for him to memorise it and preserve it.

Whereas if the answer is prolonged then it becomes difficult and confusing for those who are present and perhaps most of them will not comprehend it.

⁹ Shaykh al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

For Islaam is more than that (i.e. more than the five pillars). These are its pillars and its supports which it stands upon.

¹⁰ Shaykh al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

He (Jibreel 'alaihissalaam) said, "You have spoken the Truth"; this was a second amazing thing.

He said:

So we were amazed at him asking him a question and then saying that he had spoken the truth.

It showed that he (the questioner) was a person of knowledge and that he was not asking in the manner of a person who was ignorant. Rather, he was asking and he had knowledge, as is shown by the fact that he said, "You have spoken the Truth". So, that proves that he was a person of knowledge - so why then did he ask?

He said:

“Then inform me about *eemaan*.”

He *sall Allaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam* said:

“It is that you truly believe in Allaah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day; and that you truly believe in pre-decree – its good and its bad.”

He said: “You have spoken the truth.”

The Shaykh Saalih al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* mentions in his explanation:

Q1. That the issues which the Prophet *sall Allaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam* mentioned here:

- a) are known as the pillars of Islaam
- b) are known as the pillars of *eemaan* ¹¹
- c) must be present in a person in order for us to treat him as a Muslim ¹²
- d) are the same as the pillars of *ihsaan*

Answer: b)

Q2. That when the terms *Islaam* and *eemaan* occur together:

- a) *Islaam* refers to the outward actions ¹³
- b) *eemaan* refers to the outward actions
- c) the two words carry the same meaning
- d) then *eemaan* refers to the actions of the eyes and the limbs

Answers: a)

¹¹ Shaykh al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

So he (*sall Allaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*) mentioned to him the six pillars of *eemaan* after having mentioned to him the pillars of *Islaam*.

¹² See the footnotes for questions 8 and 9 relating to box 77 for more details about this.

¹³ Shaykh al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

And when *Islaam* and *eemaan* are mentioned together, then *Islaam* includes the outward actions and *eemaan* means the inward actions, the actions of the heart and what occurs in it (the heart) with regard to *tasdeeq* (belief and affirmation) and *‘ilm* (knowledge).

And both *Islaam* and *eemaan* are essential together, *Islaam* being the outward actions and *eemaan* being the inward actions.

Q3. That when Islaam or eemaan is mentioned alone, without the other being mentioned:

- a) Islaam is taken to include *eemaan* as well ¹⁴
- b) *eemaan* does not include Islaam
- c) it is sufficient for a person to have Islaam but not to have *eemaan* ¹⁵
- d) there is no connection between Islaam and *eemaan* ¹⁶

Answer: a)

¹⁴ Shaykh al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

And if only one of the two (Islaam and eemaan) is mentioned, then the other (unmentioned) one enters in it. If eemaan is mentioned on its own then Islaam enters within it and if Islaam is mentioned on its own then eemaan enters into it.

¹⁵ Shaykh al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

So (This is) because Islaam will not be correct without eemaan and eemaan will not be correct without Islaam; they are both essential.

¹⁶ Shaykh al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

So they are (both) inseparably linked, and therefore they say: Islaam and eemaan are from the titles which when they are (mentioned) together they separate (in meaning) and when they occur in isolation, they come together (in meaning).

Meaning: each of them enters into the other one because they are inseparably linked; and one cannot be separated from the other.

He said: "Then inform me about *al-ihsaan*."

He (*sall Allaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) said:
"It is that you worship Allaah as if you were seeing Him, and though you do not see Him then He certainly sees you."

He said: "Then inform me of the (Last) Hour."

He (*sall Allaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) said:
"The one who is asked about it knows no better than the one who is asking."^{17 18}

The Shaykh Saalih al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* mentions in his explanation:

Q1. That the *ihsaan* referred to here by the Prophet *sall Allaahu alaihi wa sallam*:

- a) is the same as *eemaan* and *Islaam*
- b) has two levels ¹⁹

¹⁷ Shaykh Muhammad Amaan al Jaami *rahimahullaah* mentions in his explanation of Thalaathat ul Usool:

Jibreel's knowledge and the Messenger's *sall Allaahu alaihi wa sallam* knowledge here were equal. The Prophet *sall Allaahu alaihi wa sallam* did not know when the Hour would be established nor did Jibreel *'alaihissalaam*.

¹⁸ Shaykh Saalih ibn Sa'd as Suhaymee *hafidhahullaah* mentions in his explanation of Thalaathat ul Usool:

With regard to the Hour, neither the Messenger *sall Allaahu alaihi wa sallam* nor Jibreel *'alaihissalaam* knew when the Hour would be established, since it from the five matters of the hidden and unseen of which Allaah has kept the knowledge to Himself, just as He, the Most High, said:

**Indeed Allaah, with Him is the knowledge of the Hour; He sends down the rain and He knows that which is in the wombs. And no one knows what he will earn tomorrow and no one knows in which land he will die.
 Allaah is indeed the All Knowing, the Fully Aware.**

Soorah Luqmaan (31) aayah 34

¹⁹ Shaykh al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

It has already preceded that the muhsin (person of ihsaan) is the person who worships Allaah as if he were actually seeing Him and upon certainty, as if he were seeing Allaah.

- c) implies that if the person tries hard enough in his worship, he will see Allaah in this world
- d) tells us that we will never see Allaah, our Lord

Answer: b)

Q2. That when the questioner asked about the Hour:

- a) he was asking whether anyone knew the time because he had to leave in a hurry
- b) he was asking about knowledge that only Allaah and His angels have ²⁰
- c) he was asking when the Final Hour would be established
- d) it showed the questioner had poor judgment in choosing his questions

Answer: c)

Q3. That anyone who asks about when the Hour will take place:

- a) must accept in his heart that it will take place at some point
- b) is a *kaafir* if he doubts that it will take place
- c) is asking about knowledge which Allaah has revealed to only a few chosen people ²¹

Or that he worships him upon the basis of being observed (by Allaah) and he knows that Allaah sees him, and therefore he perfects the action because Allaah is observing him.

So the person of ihsaan worships Allaah either seeing him with his heart – and that is more complete – or upon the basis that he is being watched and that he knows that Allaah is seeing him in whatever place and with whatever action he is doing.

This is al ihsaan.

²⁰ Shaykh al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

The answer to this question (when will the establishment of the Hour be) is not known to anyone except Allaah, the Most High, because the establishment of the Hour, its appointed time, is not known to other than Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic.

²¹ Shaykh al Fawzaan *hafidhahullaah* comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

He, the Most High, said:

Allaah - with Him is the knowledge of the Hour.

Soorah Luqmaan (31) aayah 34

And He, the Most High, said:

They ask you about the Hour – when will it come about?

Say, “Knowledge of it is with my Lord, alone; none can reveal its time but He.

Soorah al A’raaf (7) aayah 187

He is the One who knows it, He the Perfect.

And He, the Most High, said:

And with Him are the keys to the hidden and unseen.

Soorah al An’aam (6) aayah 59

And from it is the time of the Establishment of the Hour.

d) must by definition be an angel, as shown by this hadeeth

Answer: a) b)