

Its pillars are six¹: to have *eemaan* (to truly believe) in Allaah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and that you truly believe in Pre-Decree (*al-qadr*), its good and its evil.

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

Q1. That the pillars of *eemaan*:

- a) must be present for *eemaan* itself to be present
- b) are the same as the branches of *eemaan* ²
- c) are seventy odd in number
- d) are divided into the *waajib* pillars and the *mustahabb* pillars ³

Answer: a)

Q2. That when a person does not actualise one of the obligatory branches of *eemaan*:

- a) he has left Islaam altogether
- b) he has left Islaam until he makes the two shahaadahs again
- c) he is deficient in his *eemaan*

¹ Shaykh al Fawzaan comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

His saying: Its pillars are six...

*Meaning its supports which it is established upon and if they are absent or if one of them is absent, then it (*eemaan*) will be absent.*

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

*Eemaan comprises *ar-kaan* (pillars) and *shu'ab* (branches). So what is the difference between these two? The difference is that the pillars are essential. So if one of them passes away then *eemaan* passes away because a thing will not be established except upon its supporting pillars. Therefore if one the pillars of something is missing then it will not be brought about.*

*As for the branches (of *eemaan*) then they are things which complete it. *Eemaan* does not pass away if something from them is omitted.*

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

*Rather they (the branches of *eemaan*) are things which complete it, being either *waajib* (obligatory branches) or *mustahabb* (recommended branches).*

*So the obligatory (branches) are for the obligatory completion of *eemaan* and the recommended (branches) are for the desirable completion of *eemaan*.*

*Therefore if a Muslim leaves off one of the obligatory duties or he does something from the forbidden things then his *eemaan* will not pass away entirely, according to the view of the *ahl us sunnah wal jamaa'ah*. Rather the obligatory perfection of *eemaan* is missed out upon.*

d) he is still complete in his *eemaan*

Answer: c)

Q3. That when a person commits one of the *kabaair* (major sins):

- a) he has left *Islaam* through this
- b) he has left *eemaan* through this
- c) he is liable to have the legislated punishment applied to him
- d) he is a *faasiq* ⁴

Answers: c) d)

Q4. That when a person leaves off something which is *wajib* :

- a) his *eemaan* is deficient ⁵
- b) he is still a person of *eemaan*
- c) he is still a Muslim
- c) he is neither a disbeliever nor a believer

Answers: a) b) c)

Q5. That the *Khawaarij*:

- a) have the same position as the people of the *Sunnah* in the issue of *eemaan*⁶
- b) have the same position as the *Mu'tazilah* in the issue of *eemaan* ⁷

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

*So he will be deficient in eemaan or a faasiq (a sinful person) ,as would be the case if he were to drink alcohol or to steal or commit fornication or to do something from the major sins. This person would be one who had done something forbidden or committed a major sin; however he does not become a kaafir through that and he does not depart from eemaan
Rather he is a sinner and the prescribed Islaamic punishment will be established upon him if that sin has a prescribed punishment.*

⁵ Shaykh al Fawzaan comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

*So whoever abandons them(the *wajib*)then his eemaan is deficient and he is sinful due to his abandoning the obligatory duty.*

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

*This (belief mentioned above about eemaan)is the position of the ahl us sunnah wal jamaa'ah, in contrast to the *Khawaarij* and the *Mu'tazilah*, those who declare the (Muslim)who commits a major sin to be a kaafir (disbeliever).*

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

*The *Khawaarij* declare him(the Muslim who commits a major sin) to be a kaafir and they declare him to have exited from the religion.
And the *Mu'tazilah* declare that he has exited from the religion but they do not enter him into *kufr*(disbelief).rather they say that he is upon a *manzilah bayna manzilatayn*(a level between the two levels of *eemaan* and *kufr*),neither being a person of *eemaan* nor a disbeliever.*

- c) have based their position in the issue of *eemaan* upon firm evidences
- d) have left off the texts which encourage us to hope for Allaah's forgiveness⁸

Answer: d)

Q6. That the person who disobeys Allaah and His Messenger:

- a) will end up in the Hellfire
- b) may end up in the Hellfire
- c) may be forgiven by Allaah
- d) may be punished by Allaah⁹

Answer: b) c) d)

Q7. That a person's sins may be expiated:

- a) by difficulties suffered in this worldly life
- b) by being punished in the grave
- c) by being punished in this worldly life¹⁰
- d) none of the above

Answers: a) b) c)

Q8. That a person commits *kufur* by rejecting which of the following:

- a) the *taaghoot*

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

This (position of the Mu'tazilah and the Khawaarij) is an innovated position contrary to the texts and it is contrary to what the ahl us sunnah wal jamaa'ah are upon and the reason (for going astray) in that is their falling short in the use of evidence since they take hold of the evidences containing wa'eed (textual threats) and they abandon the evidences of wa'd (promise of forgiveness and mercy) such as (abandoning) His statement, He the Most High:

Indeed Allaah does not forgive that partners be set up with Him but He forgives less than that to whomsoever He wishes.

Soorah an Nisaa(4) aayah 48

This is from the evidences of wa'd (promises); it proves that the sinful person who does not reach the level of shirk and kufr, that there is hope for him of forgiveness and that he is open to receiving the threat and punishment.

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

This person (who disobeys Allaah and His Messenger) does not exit from the religion but rather he does have a threat of the Fire. So if Allaah wishes He will forgive him and if He wishes He will punish him.

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

So he (the person who sins) may receive things which expiate (for his sins) in this world or he may receive punishment in the grave which wipes away these evil acts (of his). And the things which wipe away sins are many – (for example) that he is tried with calamities, he is tried with punishments in this world or that he is punished in his grave or that otherwise it is put off until the Day of Resurrection and then he is under the mashee-ah (the wish and will of Allaah).

- b) *laa ilaaha ill Allaah*
- c) all of the Messengers
- d) one of the Messengers ¹¹
- e) one of the Messengers after Muhammad *sall Allaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*
- f) Jibraeel
- g) Paradise and the Fire

Answer: b) c) d) f) g)

Q9. That a person commits kufr :

- a) by rejecting *qadr*
- b) by saying that events occur just by chance and not according to *qadr* ¹²
- c) by leaving off one of the branches of *eemaan* ¹³
- d) if his *eemaan* becomes deficient

Answers: a) b)

Q10. That an increase in eemaan is something:

- a) which is impossible ¹⁴

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

So who ever leaves something from the pillars(of eemaan)commits kufr.

¹² Shaykh al Fawzaan comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

And likewise the person who denies al qadr (Predecree) and says, "Things just occur, without prior predecree from Allaah. Events just unexpectedly occur and the affairs occur by chance, and there is no qadr", as is stated by the extreme ones from the Mu'tazilah - then he becomes a kaafir also, because he has denied Predecree.

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

As for the person who leaves something from the branches of eemaan, then this causes his eemaan to become deficient. Either it will be a deficiency in its obligatory perfection or it will be a deficiency in the recommended perfection. But he does not become a kaafir on account of that.

¹⁴ Shaykh Saalih ibn Sa'd as Suhaymee *hafidhahullaah* mentions in his explanation of Thalaathat ul Usool:

And the salaf have defined *eemaan* with a definition that it is:

*Qawl bil lisaan
wa tasdeeq bil janaan
wa 'amal bil arkaan
yazeedu bit taa'ah wa yanqusu bil 'isyaan*

Speech upon the tongue
And attesting with the heart
And action with the limbs
It increases with obedience and it decreases with disobedience (to Allaah)

- b) which can be brought about through remembrance of Allaah ¹⁵
- c) that only the prophets could achieve
- d) that can occur through acts of obedience

Answers: b) d)

Q11. That eemaan decreases:

- a) as well as increases ¹⁶
- b) in some people to the level of being like a mustard seed ¹⁷

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

As for the proof for the increase (of eemaan) then it is His saying, He the Most High:

The people of eemaan are only those who when Allaah is mentioned, then their hearts tremble and when His aayaat are recited to them, it increases them in eemaan.

Soorah al Anfaal (8) aayah 2

This proves that eemaan increases through listening to the Qur'aan.

And His saying, He the Most High:

And when a soorah is sent down, then from them are those who say, "Who from you has this increased in eemaan?"

So as for those who have eemaan then it increases them in eemaan and they rejoice.

Soorah at Tawbah (9) aayah 124

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

Then as for (proof) for decrease (in eemaan), then (it is) that everything which increases can decrease also. Everything which is liable to increase is also liable to decrease. This is from one angle.

¹⁷ Shaykh al Fawzaan comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

And (the fact that eemaan can decrease) is also proven by his sall Allaahu 'alaihi wa sallam saying in the authentic hadeeth:

Allaah, the Perfect and Most High, will say on the Day of Resurrection:

Take out from the Fire whomsoever has in his heart a mustard seed's weight of eemaan.

[Hadeeth reported by al Bukhaaree (22) and Muslim from the hadeeth of Aboo Sa'eed al Khudree radi Allaahu 'anhu]

So this proves that eemaan can decrease to the extent that it becomes of the weight of a mustard seed in the heart.

And likewise His saying, He the Most High:

They on that day were closer to kufr (disbelief) than they were to eemaan.

Soorah aale 'Imraan (3) aayah 167

This proves that eemaan may decrease until it is closer to kufr (disbelief).

And in his sall Allaahu alaihi wa sallam saying:

Whoever amongst you sees an evil then let him correct it with his hand.

And if he is not able, then with his tongue .

And if he is not able, then with his heart.

And that is the weakest of eemaan

[Hadeeth reported by Muslim (49) from the hadeeth of Aboo Sa'eed al Khudree radi Allaahu 'anhu]

- c) with every act of obedience done for Allaah
- d) none of the above

Answers: a) b) c)

Q12. That the first pillar of eemaan :

- a) is the belief in Allaah and the Books but not the Angels
- b) is the belief in the tawheed of Allaah ¹⁸
- c) does not include the belief in Names and Attributes of Allaah ¹⁹
- d) is the one accepted by all of Banoo Aadam

Answer: b)

*And it proves that eemaan can become weak – meaning it can reduce.
So eemaan therefore increases through obedience and decreases through sin.*

¹⁸ Shaykh al Fawzaan comments in his explanation of al Usool uth Thalaathah:

So the first pillar is that you have eemaan (true faith) in Allaah and it includes the three categories of tawheed:

Eemaan that Allaah, the Perfect and Most High, is One, Unique, Alone, Samad (the Perfect Lord and Master whom everything depends upon) who has no partner in His Lordship nor in His right to be worshipped nor in His Names and Attributes.

¹⁹ Shaykh Saalih ibn ‘Abdil ‘Azeez aale Shaykh hafidhahullaah mentions in his explanation of Thalaathat ul Usool:

Eemaan in Allaah includes eemaan in the existence of Allaah, that Allaah is One in His ruboobiyyah (Lordship) and that He is One in His uloohiyyah and His being deserving of worship and that He is One in His Names and His Attributes – meaning there is nothing like unto Him in His Names and there is nothing like unto Him in His Attributes, just as He, the Most High, said:

There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All Hearing, the All Seeing.

Soorah ash Shoora (42) aayah 11