

## The Pillars of *Eemaan*

قال : وأركانها ستة : أن تؤمن بالله ، وملائكته ، وكتبه ، ورسوله ، واليوم الآخر ، وتؤمن بالقدر خيره وشره .

Its pillars are six: to have *eemaan* in Allaah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and to have *eemaan* in Pre-Decree, the good of it, and the bad of it.<sup>[43]</sup>

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[43] *Eemaan* (true faith) is composed of pillars and 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* itself passes away, because a thing will not be established except upon its supporting pillars. If a pillar from its pillars is missing, then it will not be realized and brought about. As for the branches, then they are things which complete and perfect it, *eemaan* does not pass away if something from them is omitted, rather they are things which complete it - either they are *wajibaat* (obligatory things) or *mustababbaat* (recommended things). So, the obligatory things are for the obligatory completion of *eemaan*, and as for the recommended things, then they are for desirous completion of *eemaan*.

If a Muslim leaves something from the obligatory duties, or he does something from the forbidden things, then his *eemaan* will not pass away totally in the view of the *Ablus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa`ah*, rather, the obligatory perfection is missed out on. So, he will be deficient in *eemaan* or he will be a *faasiq* (sinful person), just as will be the case if he were to drink alcohol, steal, commit fornication, or do something from the major sins. This one will be a person who has done something forbidden, and who had committed a major sin. However, he does not become a disbeliever through that, and he does not depart from *eemaan*. Rather, he is a *faasiq* and the *hadd* (prescribed punishment) will be established upon him if the sin had a prescribed punishment. And likewise, whoever leaves an obligation such as abandoning being dutiful and righteous towards the parents, or maintaining ties of kinship, these are obligatory acts, so whoever abandons them, then his *eemaan* is deficient, and he is sinful because of his abandoning the obligatory duty. So, he will be a sinner either by abandoning something obligatory or by doing something forbidden and whichever is the case, he will not exit from *eemaan*, rather he will be a believer who is deficient in his *eemaan*.

This is the position of the *Ablus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa`ah*, contrary to the *Khawaarij* and the *Mu`taẓilah*, who declare the person who commits a major sin to be a disbeliever. So, the *Khawaarij* declare him to be a *kaafir* and to have exited from the religion, and the *Mu`taẓilah* declare that he has exited from the religion, however, they do not enter him into disbelief, rather, he is in a station in between the two stations; he is not a *mu`min* (believer) and he is not a *kaafir* (disbeliever). This is their position and it is an innovated position, it is contrary to the proofs and to what the *Ablus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa`ah* are upon. And the reason in that [their erroneous conclusion] is they are falling short in the use of

evidence since they take hold of the evidences containing textual threats, and they abandon the evidences of promise, such as His saying, He the Most High:

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ ﴾ النساء: ٤٨

«Allaah does not forgive that anything be associated with Him, but He forgives whatever is less than that for whomever He wishes.» [4:48]

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

If you take this along with His saying, He the Most High:

﴿ وَمَنْ يَعِصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَأِنَّ لَهُ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا ﴾ الجن: ٢٣

«Whoever disobeys Allaah and His Messenger, then for him will be the Fire of Hell, they will dwell therein forever.» [72:23]

Whoever takes hold of what is apparent here will declare those who commit sins to be disbelievers unrestrictedly. But if he refers it back to his saying, He the Most High:

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ ﴾ النساء: ٤٨

«Allaah does not forgive that anything be associated with Him, but He forgives whatever is less than that for whomever He wishes.» [4:48]

Then the truth will become clear to him, and that this person does not exit from the religion, 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. He may receive expiating affairs which wipe away sins in this world, or he may receive punishment in the grave which wipes away these evil acts. And those expiating affairs which wipe away sins are many, such that he is tried with calamities, punishments in this world, or that he is punished in his grave, or otherwise that is put off until the Day of Resurrection, and then He is beneath Allaah's Wish and Will. This is the position of the *Ablus-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah*, and this is difference between the branches and the pillars. So, whoever leaves something from the pillars, then he becomes a disbeliever. Whoever denies *Tawheed* and commits *shirk* along with Allaah the Mighty and Majestic, then he becomes a disbeliever because he has left the first pillar. And whoever denies any one of the Messengers, then he becomes a disbeliever because he has abandoned the pillars from the pillars of Islaam. Whoever denies the Angels, then he becomes a disbeliever and he exits

from the religion, and whoever disbelieves in the Resurrection, Paradise, Fire, the Bridge of the Fire, the Balance, or anything which is established from the affairs of the Hereafter, then he becomes a disbeliever because of that. This is because he has denied a pillar from the pillars of *eemaan*. Likewise, whoever denies pre-decree (*al-Qadar*) and says: "Things just occur without prior ordainment and without pre-decree from Allaah, events just unexpectedly occur and happen," as is said by the extremists from the *Mu'tazilah* - then he also becomes a disbeliever, because he has denied pre-decree.

But as for whoever leaves something from the branches, then this causes his *eemaan* to be deficient, either it will be a deficiency in the obligatory perfection or it will be a deficiency in the recommended perfection. However, he does not become a disbeliever on account of that.

And what is the proof for the increase and decrease of *eemaan*?

As for the proof for the increase, then it is His saying, He the Most High:

﴿ إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَّتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا ﴾ الأنفال: ٢

«The believers (people of *eemaan*) are only those who, when Allaah is mentioned, their hearts tremble and when His Verses are recited to them, it increases them in *eemaan*.» [8:2]

This proves that *eemaan* increases through listening to the Qur.aan. And His saying, He the Most High:

﴿ وَإِذَا مَا أَنْزَلَتْ سُورَةٌ فَمِنْهُمْ مَن يَقُولُ أَيُّكُمْ زَادَتْهُ هَذِهِ إِيمَانًا فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فَزَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَهُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ﴾ (١٢٤) التوبة: ١٢٤

«And when a *Soorah* is sent down, from them are those who say: "Who from amongst you has this increased in faith?" As for those who truly believe, then it increases them in *eemaan* and they rejoice.» [9:124]

It proves that *eemaan* increases through the coming down of the Qur.aan, through listening to it and reflecting upon it just as occurs in His saying, He the Most High:

﴿ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا أَصْحَابَ النَّارِ إِلَّا مَلَائِكَةً وَمَا جَعَلْنَا عِدَّتَهُمْ إِلَّا فِتْنَةً لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيَسْتَيَقِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَزَادَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا

إِيمَانًا ﴾ المدثر: ٣١

«And We did not make the Guardians of the Fire except Angels, and We did not make their number except a trial for those who disbelieved so that those who were given the Scripture should be certain and so that those who were believers should increase in *eemaan* (faith).» [74:31]

So, this proves that *eemaan* increases through acts of obedience and through attesting to the truth.

As for decrease, then everything which increases can decrease also, everything which can accept an increase can accept a decrease. It is also proven by his saying *sallallaahu`alaibivasallam* in the authentic *hadeeth*:

«إن الله سبحانه وتعالى يوم القيامة يقول: أخرجوا من النار من كان في قلبه مثقال حبة من خردل من إيمان»

«On the Day of Resurrection, Allaah the Perfect and Most High will say: Take out from the fire whoever has in his heart a mustard seed's weight of *eemaan*.»<sup>1</sup>

So, this proves that *eemaan* can reduce to the extent that it becomes of the weight of a mustard seed in the heart. Likewise, His saying, He the Most High:

﴿ هُمْ لِلْكَافِرِ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَقْرَبُ مِنْهُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ ﴾

«They on that day, were closer to disbelief than they were to *eemaan*.» [3:167]

This proves that *eemaan* may reduce until it is closer to disbelief.

And in his saying *sallallaahu`alaibivasallam*:

«من رأى منكم منكراً فليغيره بيده ، فإن لم يستطع فبلسانه ، فإن لم يستطع فبقلبه ، وذلك أضعف الإيمان»

«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*.»<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Reported by al-Bukhaaree no. 22 and Muslim no. 184, from a *hadeeth* of Aboo Sa`eed al-Khudree.

<sup>2</sup> Reported by Muslim no. 49 from a *hadeeth* of Aboo Sa`eed al-Khudree (*radiyallaahu`anh*).

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

His saying: «**Its pillars are six**» meaning: it supports which it is established upon, and if they are absent, then it will be absent, or if one of them is absent, then it will be absent.

They are six pillars, and they are:

**The first one:** «To have *eemaan* in Allaah.» So, the first pillar is having *eemaan* in Allaah, and it includes the three categories of *Tamheed*: *Eemaan* that Allaah the Perfect and Most High is One, Unique, Alone, the Perfect Lord and Master whom everything depends totally upon, Who has no Partner in His Lordship, nor in His Right to worship, nor in His Names and Attributes.