

«لا يرى عليه أثر السفر ، ولا يعرفه منا أحد ، حتى جلس إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فأسند ركبتيه إلى ركبتيه ، ووضع كفيه على فخذيه ، وقال : يا محمد أخبرني عن الإسلام.»

«No signs of having traveled could be seen upon him and none of us knew him until he sat with the Prophet *sallallaahu`alaihivasallam*. He placed his knees against his knees and placed his hands upon his thighs and said:

'O Muḥammad, inform me about *al-Islam*.'»^[49]

[49] **No signs of having traveled could be seen upon him and none of us knew him:** Meaning: from those who were present. This was something amazing: he had not arrived from a journey so that it could be said: "He is from other than the people of al-Madeenah." Yet, they did not recognize him. He was not from the people of the city so that they could recognize him. So, they were confused about him. He was not someone who had come from a journey nor was he someone from the people of the town. If he had arrived from a journey, then the signs of having traveled would have appeared upon him, his clothing and his color, because the effects of traveling appear upon a traveler. No one from those present recognized him, so he was not from the people of the city. Yet he had not arrived from a journey. So what could this man be? This is what they found strange.

He sat with the Prophet *sallallaahu`alaihivasallam*: In front of him with the sitting of a student with his teacher.

He placed his two knees against the two knees of the Prophet *sallallaahu`alaihivasallam*: Meaning: He was very close to him.

He placed his two hands upon his thighs: Meaning: Thighs of the Prophet *sallallaahu`alaihivasallam*.

So **he said: 'O Muḥammad!'** He addressed him by his name and he did not say: 'O Messenger of Allaah.' Perhaps he did that, *`alaihissalaam*, in order that the companions should think that he was from the people of the desert (i.e. Bedouin), because it was from the habit and custom of the people of the desert that when they used to address the Prophet *sallallaahu`alaihivasallam*, they would do so by his name. This is because the people of the desert have their own nature and customs. And it was also an addition in rendering it something strange and obscure so that they would not recognize him.

He said: 'O Muḥammad, inform me about *al-Islam*!' Meaning: explain to me the meaning of *Islam*.

قال : «أن تشهد أن لا إله إلا الله ، وأن محمدا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وتقيم الصلاة ، وتؤتي الزكاة ، وتصوم رمضان ، وتحج البيت إن استطعت إليه سبيلا ، فقال : صدقت ، فعجبنا له يسأله ويصدقه .

He said: «It is that you testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allaah *sallallaahu `alaihiwasallam*, and you establish the prayer, give *Zakaah*, fast *Ramadaan*, and perform pilgrimage to the House if are able to make your way to it.» He said: 'You have spoken the truth.' So we were amazed at him, asking him the question and then saying that he had spoken the truth.^[50]

[50] «*Islaam* is that you testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allaah *sallallaahu `alaihiwasallam*, and you establish the prayer, give *Zakaah*, fast *Ramadaan*, and perform pilgrimage to the House if are able to make your way to it» The Prophet *sallallaahu `alaihiwasallam* mentioned to him the pillars of *Islaam* which are essential and are such that if they are implemented, *Islaam* is brought about. And whatever is extra to them from the other matters, then they are matters of completion. The Messenger *sallallaahu `alaihiwasallam* limited himself to an explanation of the pillars of *Islaam* since the shorter an answer is, the easier it will be for the student and the listener. It will be easy for him to memorize and preserve it. Whereas, if the answer is prolonged, it becomes difficult and confusing for those who are present, and perhaps most of them will not comprehend it. Therefore, this is a proof that a person who is questioned - it is befitting that he should strive to make an abridgement as far as he is able to and he should limit himself to that which is necessary. Otherwise, the fact is that *Islaam* is more than that. These are its pillars and its supports which it stands upon.

«He said: You have spoken the truth» This was a second amazing thing.

He said: «We were amazed at him, asking him a question and then saying that he had spoken the truth» It showed that he was a person of knowledge. He was not asking in the manner of a person who is ignorant, rather he was asking and he had knowledge as is shown by the fact that he said: «You have spoken the truth.» That proves that he was a person of knowledge. Therefore, why he did ask the question?

قال : فأخبرني عن الإيمان ، قال : «أن تؤمن بالله ، وملائكته ، وكتبه ، ورسوله ، واليوم الآخر ، وتؤمن بالقدر خيره وشره» ، قال : صدقت .

He said: 'Inform me about *eemaan*.' He said: «It is that you have *eemaan* (truly believe) in Allaah, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Last Day, and you have *eemaan* in the pre-decree, the good of it and the bad of it.» He said: 'You have spoken the truth.'^[51]

[51] He said: 'Inform me about *eemaan*.' He said: «It is that you have *eemaan* (truly believe) in Allaah, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Last Day, and you have *eemaan* in the pre-decree, the good of it and the bad of it» The Messenger *sallallaahu`alaibivasallam* mentioned to him the six pillars of *eemaan* after he mentioned the pillars of *Islaam*.

Islaam and *eemaan*, when they are mentioned together, *Islaam* means outward actions and *eemaan* means inward actions, the actions of the heart and what occurs in it with regard to *tasdeeq* (affirmation) and *ilm* (knowledge). Both *Islaam* and *eemaan* are essential together, *Islaam* being the outward actions and *eemaan* being the inward actions, because of his saying *sallallaahu`alaibivasallam*:

«الإسلام علانية ، والإيمان في القلب»

«*Islaam* is apparent and *eemaan* is in the heart.»¹

If both are mentioned together, each one has a separate and specific meaning to it. If one of them is mentioned on its own, the other one enters within it. If *eemaan* is mentioned on its own, *Islaam* enters within it. If *Islaam* is mentioned on its own, *eemaan* enters into it, because *Islaam* will not be correct without *eemaan* and *eemaan* will not be correct without *Islaam*. Both are essential. They are inseparably linked, therefore they say: *Islaam* and *eemaan* are from those titles which when they come together, they separate, and when they occur singularly, they come together. Meaning: each of them enters into the other one, because they are inseparably linked and one cannot be separated from the other. So, he asked him about the outward actions and about the inward actions. And he *sallallaahu`alaibivasallam* explained to him the pillars of both *Islaam* and *eemaan*.

¹ Reported by *Imaam Ahmad* as a *hadeeth* of *Anas*, *radiyallaahu`anhu*. [*Shaykh* al-Albaanee mentioned in his *Da'eeful-Jaami`* that this particular *hadeeth* is *da'eef* (weak). And in his explanation of *at-Tabaariyyah*, he said: Its chain of narration is weak, it contains `Alee ibn Mas`adah, about whom al-Uqayri said: He is from the *du`afaab*. Al-Bukhaaree said: He is a person of suspect. `Abdul-Haqq al-`Azdi said in his book *al-Abkaam al-Kubraa* about this *hadeeth*: This *hadeeth* is not correctly preserved. And Allaah knows best.]

قال : أخبرني عن الإحسان ، قال : «أن تعبد الله كأنك تراه ، فإن لم تكن تراه فإنه يراك ،» قال : فأخبرني عن الساعة ، قال : «ما المسئول عنها بأعلم من السائل» .

He said: Inform me about *ihsaan*. He said: «That you worship Allaah as if you were seeing Him, and even though you do not see Him, He, certainly, sees you.» He said: 'Inform me about the Last Hour.' He said: «The one who is being asked about it does not know any better than the one who is asking»^[52]

[52] He said: Inform me about *ihsaan*. He said: «That you worship Allaah...» It has already preceded that the 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. Or that he worships Him upon the basis of his being observed and he knows that Allaah sees him, 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 he knows that Allaah is seeing him in whatever place and with whatever action he is doing. This is *ihsaan*.

He said: 'You have spoken the truth. Inform me about the Last Hour.' Meaning: about the establishment of the Hour. When will it be? This question - the answer of it is not known to anyone, except to Allaah, the Perfect and Most High, because the establishment of the Hour - its appointed time is not known except to Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic.

We know that the Hour will be established. We have no doubt about that. Whoever doubts that, then he is a disbeliever. We know that the Hour will be established and it will certainly occur. However, the time at which Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic, will establish the Hour, He has not informed us about it and He has not explained it to us. He has kept it secret within His Knowledge. He the Most High said:

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ ﴾ لقمان: ٣٤

«Allaah! With Him is the knowledge of the Hour.» [31:34]

And He, the Most High, said:

﴿ يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسِنُهَا قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِنْدَ رَبِّي لَا يُجَلِّيهَا لِوَقْتِهَا إِلَّا هُوَ ﴾ الأعراف: ١٨٧

«They ask you about the Hour: 'When will it come about?' Say: 'Its knowledge is with my Lord alone. None can reveal its time but He.'» [7:187]

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

He, the Most High, said:

﴿ وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ ﴾ الأنعام: ٥٩

«And with Him are the keys to the hidden and unseen, none knows them but He.» [6:59]

From it [the hidden and unseen] is the time and establishment of the Hour.

He *sallallaahu`alaibivasallam* said to Jibreel: «**The one who is being asked about it does not know any better than the one who is asking**» Meaning: I and you are the same. We do not know when the Hour will be established. Allaah, the Majestic and Most High, did not make anyone aware of that, neither the Angels, the Messengers, nor anyone. Rather, He kept it secret in His Knowledge, He the Perfect and most High.