

# THE BEGINNING OF GUIDANCE



Ustadh Ubaydullah Evans

## SESSION 2

### The Beginning of Guidance by Imam Ghazali

- In his second session, Ustadh Ubaydullah Evans goes over the second chapter of “The Beginning of Guidance” by Imam Al-Ghazali. In this second chapter, Imam Al-Ghazali explains that the commands of God are either obligatory or optional. Just as the people around us have rights upon us, Allah SWT has Divine rights upon us.

### Divine Rights

- Just by the nature of being Divine, Allah SWT has certain rights. Everything about the essence of Allah SWT is different than ours. With that in mind, there are some things inherently due to him, like our acts of worship, such as prayer and fasting. These are the actions to be a decent human being, that justify our existence.

As a side note, if there are those that do not follow these acts, we still treat them neighborly and respect, just as the Prophet SAW did.

- Imam Al-Ghazali compares the faraidh (obligatory acts) to an initial investment. The nawafil (optional acts) are the profit, the means of becoming closer to Allah SWT.
- There are those within our lives that simply do what they're obligated to do and leave it at that. There is no problem in doing so. These people are to be respected in their approach.
- However, there are those that are not satisfied with simply passing the bar, they want to excel. They approach the faith with high enthusiasm. This is for the people who want something extra out of their faith.

Allah SWT loves those with these 7 characteristics

1. **Taqwa** (God-consciousness)
2. **Tahara** (purity)
3. **Tawbah** (asking for forgiveness)
4. **Tawakkul** (depending, trusting)
5. **Sabr** (patience)
6. **Ihsaan** (excellence)
7. **Qist** (just)

- If you can practice even just one of these, you can become a friend of Allah SWT. The Prophet SAW was the best of all seven of these attributes.
- As we think of high spiritual ascension, we sometimes mistake this with tahajjud or extra fasts. These are important, but sometimes they have the wrong priority. It starts with faraidh. If you want to get to the place with Allah SWT, it will not happen through rules and regulations, but through adab (etiquettes).

## Adab

- Relationships in our lives are at their weakest when you simply focus on rules and regulations upon each other. When you speak about a high form of love, you talk about etiquettes. Disobedience breaks that covenant of love.
- Even if our spouses have the responsibilities of taking care of certain rights within the family, we verbally thank them because that is love. That is a form of adab.
- Think of your relationship with Allah SWT as adab.

## Etiquettes in Starting the Day

- From the spiritual perspective, all of the parts of the body tremble awaiting what the tongue will first do upon waking up in the morning. Let anything you say as you wake up to be but praise of Allah SWT. Let it first pass your heart and then your tongue.

- When you wear new clothes, do not do it for others. The Prophet SAW would ask for safeguard against the Evil Eye.
- Even entering the bathroom has an etiquette. Knowing that shayateen congregate within the bathroom we minimize the time in it (Ustadh Ubaydullah did also recognize that bathrooms in Imam Al-Ghazali's time were structured a bit different than ours). We enter with our left foot and exit with our left foot while reciting a du'a.
- You can make even the most mundane of actions a form of worship with the right intention.

## FAQs

- What are the two grades of the commands of Allah SWT?
- What rights do we have to abide by in regards to Allah SWT?
- What are seven characteristics Allah SWT loves?
- Should one focus on rules and regulations or etiquettes regarding their relationship with Allah?
- How should one start the day, right as they wake up?
- How should we enter the bathroom?

## Quotes

"If we want to reach a high station with Allah SWT, it is not through rules and regulations, it is through adab".

"You can make your mundane actions a worship, with the right intention".

"Becoming closer to Allah SWT does not start with optional fasts or praying tahajjud, it begins with the faraidh".

"Disobedience breaks that covenant of love with Allah SWT".

"When you wake up, let the first thing that passes your heart to your tongue be the praise of Allah SWT".