

Fine-Tuning Your Relationship with Allah

Talk by Es-Seyyid Es Shaykh Taner Ansari
Followed by Talk by Es-Sharifa Es Shaykha Muzeyyen Ansari
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Bismillah er Rahman er Rahim [In the Name of Allah, The One Who Acts with Mercy, The Source of Mercy]. All praise belongs to Allah. Allah owns everything. All power belongs to Allah and not to us. May Allah's peace and blessings be on Prophet Muhammad and his family and on all the other prophets and their families.

Everything starts with the following:

1. You have to accept that Allah is God and you are not. He is the Creator, He owns the laws and regulations and the formulas.
2. You are just one of His manifestations that He programmed and designed on earth.
2. You need to know yourself, what you are made of, how you see things and what you do.
3. You have to get to know what Allah is, what His purpose is and what He does.

How you are made

Your soul is Allah's energy/light. Your heart is the modem to Allah. *Nafs/ego* is your distraction and your brain is the computer to plot the path for you to walk on. You observe with your five senses outside and register what you observed. You get desires from your nafs, some aspects of which are outrageous and not in accord with guidelines. You have to realize this. You have an inspector monitoring in your heart, confirming what's right and confirming what's wrong. All these are things that are happening at the same time. Your brain is working like a motor. Your heart is giving impulses to your brain. Your nafs is saying, "let's do this and let's do that." All these processes are happening.

At first, most of the time you don't care about what's right and wrong. You think it's fun. What changes your actions and motives are your priorities. When you are young, your priority is to have fun, and you are subject to action that gives you fun. Then your priorities change when you become a father and mother. Your priority becomes, "How do I take care of my kids?" As you go through stages of life, your priority changes, and you have to change your actions to achieve the goal of that priority. Some think that they have to make a lot of money. Some think otherwise. You are designed to do this for your self-preservation. And then you notice that what you want usually doesn't happen and you blame others for this.

But some of us see this as a clue that there is a Higher Power that maybe we should pay attention to. You realize that there has to be God because what you want is not happening even after all your planning, preparing and studying and all that. Then you want to have a communication with this Power. This is the beginning of your relationship with your Creator, your Lord and your Master.

How deep and strong a relationship do you want with this power we call Allah, which means *Al Ilah*, the One Worthy of devoting yourself to, The One and Only. There can only be One Most Powerful to Whom all power belongs to and that's what we call ALLAH.

How sincere are you to have a good relationship with Allah?

Choose your categories. Do you want Allah to be your friend? Do you want Allah to be your beloved? Do you want Allah to be your protector? Do you want Allah to be your Lord and you are subject? There are many other relationships you can choose with Allah. Which ones do you want Allah to be for you?

We have to remember that this is the part that you need to think about, contemplate, investigate and learn. You are created and your values are the values of the earth, this world. Allah is God and His values are divine. Allah is the Creator.

The design of the world

There are billions of galaxies, stars and creations, and when we compare you to it (to the whole), you are not even a speck. But still ALLAH VALUES YOU. He takes an energy line to you, and His line is not limited to you and Him, but yours is. He has other universes, rules and regulations to perform and maintain. You, your body, your family, sisters, brothers and neighbors, etc. are all in this big picture. Allah has to do what is just and right according to the plan: action, reaction and so many other things. You need to understand this. For example, when I see Allah as friend, I say Allah is my friend but then Allah goes and kills my mother. This is where I am thinking of friendship in worldly terms. Allah's friendship is not in worldly terms. Allah is my Friend. I am not His friend because I am not respecting His work. Allah killing my mother is not a part of a friendship relationship. That's a separate job for Him to do. When the time comes, everything is going to die; everyone has to pay for what they do here on earth. Evil will win for a while, then the good will win. Social laws and such have to be maintained. This is beyond your relationship with Allah as a Friend.

How is Allah a Friend to you?

You go through life with so much ignorance. But Allah protects you; Allah is your Protecting Friend. When you say, "You are my friend", then Allah may give you someone on earth to become a friend to you. What is Allah's Walihood/Protecting Friendship? Allah becomes your Friend on His terms. You have to accept those terms. When you do this, then you see eye to eye. Our relationship is not based on equality. How can it be? Allah is Almighty, All Wise and we are nothing. What He expects from us as a friend is to please have respect for His work. Don't judge Him. When you judge Him this is not part of your friendship. He did not become your Friend so you can judge Him. Friends don't judge each other. Don't swear at Him and don't criticize Him. What shall we do? You can LOVE ALLAH with the same magnitude that HE IS LOVING YOU. THAT'S THE CLOSEST EQUALITY YOU CAN GET HERE: as BELOVED. When you love somebody you don't think of yourself. And Allah will test your sincerity. What He is looking for is divine love where you hold nothing back from each other. Who do you really love? You want to love Allah, but in reality you love yourself more. You don't want to get hurt. But in true love, and in the definition of true love for Allah, the lover thinks of the Beloved, not of himself or herself. You can do so many things for your Beloved and you don't even feel pain, agony or tiredness.

One of *ilahis* describes this:

**Ferhat bugün ben oldum
Varlık dağımı deldim
Şirin'ime varmağa**

*I became Ferhat this day
I cut through the mountain of Being
To reach my Shirin*

Ferhat and Shirin

Ferhat wants to marry Shirin. He finds out that Shirin’s father is a king. The king said to Ferhat, “You can marry my daughter if you bring water from the other side of the mountain”. Ferhat loves Shirin so much that he does not even think of the magnitude of this work. He begins to dig and cut through the mountain, and he brings the water.

Do you understand? It is not easy to be Allah’s beloved. Allah is your Friend but are you Allah’s friend? Allah is your Beloved but are you Allah’s beloved? You have to prove this with your sincerity. The sign if you are there or not is: Are you angry with Allah? Do you criticize Allah? Do you say, for example, why did you do this to the innocents? Do you interfere with Allah’s work? Do you give Him advice?

Remember, Allah is always right. You cannot win. You are dependent on Allah. He holds the rope, the wheel and the buttons for power. You are just the end result, with no power, only with the manifestation that is aware, with the purpose to see, observe, understand and return Allah’s love to Him willingly, peacefully and smilingly.

So this is your challenge and don’t tell me I didn’t warn you. I warned, but you want it. If you are sincere in this path, when you are tested, don’t get frustrated but follow these guidelines:

1. Have good assumptions for Allah – you have to believe that Allah’s intention for His creations is good.
2. Allah is Just and He has to act with justice. You may not understand His justice because you don’t have enough data.
3. When you come to a situation where you want to criticize and yell at Allah, don’t do it. Instead, ask Allah to explain it to you. Say, “Oh Allah, I do not understand this.” Do not swear at Him and do not get angry. When you get angry it means you want things to be your way compared to Allah’s. Look at this big universe and locate yourself and then give your advice to Allah.
4. So hold on to the rope of Allah very tight. This is your only salvation. Do not let go. When you are tested, ask Allah’s help to pass it and see your incompleteness.

—*Murshid Shaykh Taner Ansari*

A Hard Subject We Must All Face

Thank you, Shaykh Taner, for talking about a hard subject that we must all face. When we say we want Allah and we want to be in love with Allah, these questions will come up: “Are you Allah’s friend?” Yes. “Is Allah your friend?” Maybe.

These kinds of doubts and concerns arise sometimes because of what you see as injustice. It may well be injustice, and very truly some bad things happen. Sometimes we go through very hard tests, especially with regards to family. Some people are oppressing other people. It is so unjust. We say, “My God why you letting this happen?”

We came to this world to know Allah. To know Allah is to love Allah and how we do this is with our understanding. In our situation we look at our children, at what they are going through. Because of some of the experiences that they are going through, we say, “Well, if I were to say to Allah: ‘I am your friend and You are my Friend, but I see them suffer. I don’t

want to see this. I love them,” I am coming from a loving place. Yet what we have observed in reality is that’s not how it works. We all have our share of experiences/tests and some of them we have brought on with our own hands. I believe strongly that what goes around comes around. Some of the things are coming from generations back and some are environmental. All these experiences are not what life is about. What it is about is how we handle it.

For example, I see all the stuff your Shaykh is going through and all the patience that he has to have. When you get closer to Allah you might even have more problems.

We should pray for our family, friends, the world and students to learn what they need to learn to get closer to Allah. Again our goal is Allah.

If you are irritable with someone or upset with somebody, then the goal is you. What the goal has to be is Allah. How do you handle that irritation? You can handle it in a way that is pleasing to Allah or in a way pleasing to you. I think our choice every day in choosing Allah is to make that choice over and over and over again, and this how we build our light---body in the next world. Not many of us get many chances, or even one great heroic sacrifice or deed. Every decision we make either gets us closer to Allah or closer to ourselves.

Allah says that His Mercy has encompassed His Power. So why must we be upset and irritated with this and that? Our task is to be more merciful, compassionate and loving. It’s hard. So we need Allah’s help. We need our rope and we need our Shaykh and to “let go and let God”.

—*Shaykha Muzeyyen Ansari*

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Editorial Staff: Shaykha Muzeyyen Ansari, Shaykha Sheila Khadija Foraker, Carol Janan Taylor, Shaykh Reeyaz Goolamhossen, Rosie Nur-ImanWhite, Shaykh Anjum Baig, Shaykha Elizabeth Muzeyyen Brown

Transcriptions: Shaykh Reeyaz Goolamhossen, Hazmatally Goolam Hossen, Inna Faktorovich, Carol Janan Taylor, Nazeemah Soomar Adam

Holy Days Author: David Sander, Ph.D.