Chapter - IV

GHAZALI ON FREE-WILL

1. Nature of Man

As the question of freedom of will arises only in human context, any discussion on this issue must start with grappling the question of human nature. The philosophy of al-Ghazali is a more or less full length interpretation of Islam and it is also a complete philosophy of man. Ghazali tries to explain the creation of human being with the help of Qur’anic verse,

"And when I fashioned him (the human individual) I breathed (lit, blew) into him some of My spirit".  

So, he explains the creation of man as a process in which in suitable condition matter receives the spirit.

"Fashioning (taswiyah) is the process which occurs in matter to make it suitable to receive the spirit. This matter is the quintessence of clay in respect to Adam; it is the human germ cell (nutfah) in respect to his descendents. The germ-cell becomes what it is after passing through numerous stages, starting with clay. The clay is transformed into food (through plants and animals), the food into blood, and blood into a male’s sperm and female’s egg. The male’s sperm then is united with the female’s egg in a “receptacle sure”. In the womb itself the result of this union goes through a long process of transformations until it finally achieves a harmonious constitution (jibillah) and becomes suitable to receive the spirit”.

Before receiving the spirit of God man was only matter. This matter is inherent in the human being. Every individual receives the spirit from God
when the embryo is ready for receiving it. At the time when spirit unites with body a new creature in the form of human being comes into existence. There are two pre-conditions that are necessary for any individual being to come into existence. First one is the greatness and generosity of God, and the second is the particular constitution in the human being for accepting the generosity of God. Generosity of God is always needed for the human being to come into existence. The relation between God’s generosity and matter’s receiving of it are same as sun and the things that received its light. As sun gives its light to an object without giving up its own substance, so also the matter’s partaking into the spirit of God does not affect or reduce God’s original spirituality. When it is said “my spirit”, it does not mean the human spirit is a part of God’s spirit. This idea makes Ghazali differ from some other Sufis who spoke of the possibility of man’s identity with God. Ghazali rejects this idea and maintains that God is essentially different from man and the world. The human personality and his characteristics are the result of meeting of the body and the spirit.

“The characteristics of his body and all that is generated within the human personality, as a result of the meeting of the spirit with its body, are all necessary accidents and are what they are in order to adequately serve the spirit in the fulfillment of its “Trust”.

It is the combination of spirit and matter that constitutes the human self. As to the question, what is meant by “human self” (nafs), Ghazali says it is not easy to answer it in simple terms. If it is said that it is the spirit connected to the body and working with it, then a number of questions come to the forth. Like what is the nature of spirit itself? How is it connected with the
body? What attributes are generated as a result of this connection? How do these attributes assist or hinder the development of man and his ability to know reality? Why is man created in the fashion he is? And how can man utilize the whole of his personality in the fulfillment of his trust?

Like any other Sufi Ghazali, too, speaks of a lower self of man and a higher self which, in other words, means man’s having an animal self and a spiritual self. The nature of animal self is eating, sleeping and fighting. One who is completely under the domination of his animal nature is always busy in these activities. The higher or spiritual self, on the other hand, is what leads man to pursue God and the realization of His attributes. Corresponding to these two are the two kinds of natures namely, devilish and angelic. The devilish nature is to deceive or misguide others; if you have such nature, you are engaged in doing devil’s work. Angelic nature is to contemplate beauty of God. Ghazali says, if you have angelic nature then you are searching out your original nature.

A third way of describing the same duality is to call the two realities as body and soul.

“The first step to self-knowledge is to know that thou art composed of an outward shape, called the body, and an inward entity called the heart, or soul”.4

But heart does not mean the physical heart. The heart or the spirit, which constitutes the human nature is called by Ghazali as “latifah rabbuniyah”, which resides in the body. This latifah has different states according to its various activities and its life in the body. It is also beyond the comprehension of ordinary understanding. However, it has four terms and
each of them indicates the reality of spirit, and represents the various activities showing the relationship of the spirit to its body. Each term indicates a reciprocity of interaction between the latifah and the body. The four terms are:

i. Qalb (heart)
ii. Ruh (spirit or soul)
iii. Nafs (the self) and
iv. Aql (the intellect or intelligence)

1. **Qalb (Heart)**: The heart is the deepest basis of man’s cognizant nature. The term heart in Qur’an is described as the seat of knowledge. According to al-Ghazali, Qalb has two meanings. In its first sense, it is a piece of flesh on the left side of the body to be literally called the heart. The second meaning of Qalb is soul that is

   “an immaterial thing or formless latifa or basic subtle element which has got connection with the material heart. It is just like unseen electricity”.5

The relation of the latifah with the heart is same as the relation between machine and the machine-man or a house and the person who resides in the house.

“The qalb (heart) “resides” in the physical heart and refers to the latifah in man while it lives in its body”.6

When a man disobeys the commandments, it is not the man but his heart that has rebelled against God. The heart is happy when near to God. It is disappointed and restless when man pollutes and corrupts it.
ii. *Ruh* (Spirit or Soul) : Like the heart, *Ruh* or soul also dwells in the physical heart. It has also got two meanings. In the first meaning, it is

"a material thing within the heart which vibrates the whole body like the current of electricity and which runs through the veins of the body. It is called ‘life’".7

This kind of soul has the power of touching, hearing, seeing, smell and also the powers of other body organs. We can understand the effect of *Ruh* in body in the likeness of the candle in the room.

"Without leaving itself, its “light” spreads *life* into the whole body. In its essential side, the *ruh* is the *latifah*, and therefore, is exclusively divine".8

The second meaning of soul is “immaterial thing”. Here it is called soul not life.

iii. *Nafs* (self) : The *nafs* is etymologically related to a word whose root meaning is “breathing”. In Arabic literature, it is used interchangeably with the words like “soul”, “life”, “appetite” and “worldly desires”. It has also two meanings. The first meaning is passion or lower self and includes such proclivities as greed, anger, lust and such other evil attributes. The second meaning of *nafs* is the same as that of the “divine subtlety”. The latter state of self is the actual states which have developed from the previous state.

"Thus it refers to actual relationships between the heart and the appetites of the body and the particular condition of the “divine subtlety” under these conditions".9

There are three stage of the *nafs* according to Qur’an :

a) *al-nafs al ammarah*

b) *al nafs al-lawwamah*
c) al nafs al-mutmainnah

(a) al-nafs al ammarah (The self that commands evil) : At the lowest level, self is slave of passion. This level Qur’an describes as, “Verily the self indeed commands to evil”.\(^9\) This is wholly evil stage. It is overpowered by passions. It obeys the order of passion willingly.

(b) al-nafs al lawwamah (The upbraiding self) : This is the struggling self. In this state, self is struggling against anger and lust. The Qur’an refers this state in its verse

“And nay! I swear by the self that upbraids...”\(^1\)

This is an unsettled and confusing stage where the self is undecided in making choice between good and evil.

(c) al-nafs al-mutmainnah : (The tranquil self) :

This is the highest stage of the nafs. Qur’an describes it as “O tranquil self return unto thy lord, well pleased and accepted”.\(^12\) This stage of the self is good and illumined consciousness. The self in this stage always acts according to the dictates of reason. Man can rise to this stage from the stage of al-nafs lawwamah by finally overcoming the dictates of nafs-ammarah.

iv. Aql (intelligence) : This is the last term used by Ghazali in discussing man’s nature. It has several meanings. But Ghazali has used only two terms to indicate its two meanings. For one thing, “Aql is intellect with which true nature of things of this material world is known and its seat is in soul”. The other meaning is that “it is power to understand the secrets of different learning”.\(^13\)
Now if we consider the four terms together, we find that the two of these viz. nafs (self) and aql (intelligence) refer to the actual states of human being. Ghazali says that the latifah has its seat in the physical heart and rules over other bodily organs. This is same as saying that God has His seat in heaven and rules over universe. Ghazali refers this relationship between the spirit and the body as “armies”. He chooses the word ‘armies” because the relationship of the heart to the body is same as the relationship of the king to the kingdom.

“For the carrying on of this spiritual warfare... the body may be figured as a kingdom, the soul is its king, and the different senses and faculties as constituting army. Reason may be called the vizier, or prime minister, passion the revenue collector, and anger the police officer”.14

The use of the word “army” is also for the reason of similarity that man has with the God. As man has sovereignty over his body so has God the sovereignty over the universe. The “armies” are of two kinds. First one is the army that is visible to our eyes while the second one is that which is not visible to our eyes but visible only to ‘heart’. The relationship between heart and body falls into three classes. First one is “intended to excite and urge the body either to obtain the useful and agreeable, such as appetite, or avert the harmful and disagreeable such as anger”.15 This class is called “Will”.

The second is the ‘power’ that moves body and its parts. The third class in which sense organs perceive the external things is called “sensory knowledge and perception”. The main purpose of it is to maintain the
relationship between the body and the heart and to let survive a healthy body.

After describing the human nature in terms of various latifah, Ghzali describes man’s character as consisting of beastly, animal, devilish and angelic qualities.

“There are four natures of man – (1) beastly nature, (2) animal nature, (3) devilish nature, (4) angelic nature”.

Beastly nature of man shows the anger, hatred, rebuke and so on. The animal nature shows mainly his sexual passions. In the devilish nature we find the quality of deceit, fraud, conspiracy and so on. Lastly, in the angelic nature we find in the man divine service, worship of God, doing good to all etc. The root of man’s nature is his soul. If he has lower animal nature, he becomes like a pig or dog. If he has devilish nature, he becomes a devil. If he has got divine nature, he becomes a truly wise man. It cannot however be said that an individual man has only this or that nature. Most men have all of them together.

But the question that arises here is if man is created with animal, demonic and angelic qualities, then how can we say that the latter constitute his real essence, while the former are merely accidental and changeable. The answer of this question is that the ‘quality’, either of demonic or angelic nature, is found in man in abundance. And it is through these that we determine the essence of man.

“Thus the horse and the ass are both burden bearing animals, but the superiority of the horse to the ass consists in its being adapted for use in battle. If it fails in this, it becomes degraded to the rank of burden-bearing animals”.
Same is the case with man. He has the highest faculty of reason. And it is through reason that he gets the knowledge of God.

“As regard his mere animal qualities, man is inferior to many animals, but reason makes him superior to them, as it is written in the Koran: “To man We have subjected all things in the earth”.

It is by rational soul that man has both knowledge and power. Through this power also man excels from other kinds of creatures.

“The glory and dignity of man, by which he excels other kind of creatures, lies in his capacity to know God. This knowledge is his beauty, perfection and honour in this world, and his equipment and store in the world to come”.

Man has capacity of both knowledge and will, which Ghazali calls “armies of the heart”. These two armies of the heart i.e. knowledge and will distinguish man not only from animals but also children. As a child man is incomplete.

A yet another way of the description of man used by Ghazali is to talk of what he calls various types of ‘spirits’. They are as follows:

i. **The sensory spirit** : This kind of spirit is recipient of information through senses. Its root and origin is animal spirit. It is found even in the infants and animals.

ii. **The imaginative spirit** : Through this spirit informations are recorded by senses. It is not found in the infants. An infant wants to get hold of a thing when he sees it, and he forgets about it when it is out of his sight. If sometimes he wants to get that thing it is because its image is still with him
preserved in his imagination. The faculty of imagination is possessed by some but not all animals. That means some have power of imagination and recording while others have not.

"for example, in the moth which perishes in the flame. [40] The moth makes for the flame, because of its desire for the sunlight, and, thinking that the flame is a window opening to the sunlight, it hurries on to the flame, and injures itself".20

The flame gives permanent pain to moth for which reason it should not go near the flame. But since it has forgotten the pain it goes near the flame again and again. This indicates that moth does not have the capacity of recording and imagination. On the other hand, dog has the capacity of recording or, in other words, it has power of memory.

"the dog that has received one whipping runs away whenever it sees the stick again".21

iii. The intelligential spirit: This spirit has special faculty through which one can apprehend ideas which is beyond the spheres of sense and imagination. This faculty found is specially in human being. It is not found in the lower animals, even not in children.

iv. The discursive spirit: This kind of spirit collects the data, arranges them as premises and then draws the conclusion from them:

"This takes the data of pure reason and combines them, arranges them as premises, and deduces from them forming knowledge".22

v. The transcendental prophetic spirit: This kind of spirit is found among prophets and some saints. From this spirit they can gain knowledge of unseen world.
"By it the unseen tables and statutes of the Law are revealed from the other world, together with several of the sciences of the Realms Celestial and Terrestrial, and pre-eminently theology, the science of Deity, which the intelligential and discursive spirit can not compass".23

By these kinds of spirit the existing things are manifested. Each has a light by which things are lighted. Ghazali symbolized these spheres of spirits with the help of famous Quranic verse. He symbolized sensory spirit as "Niche". Imaginative spirit is symbolized as glass. The intelligential spirit is symbolized as lamp and the discursive spirit as Tree and the transcendental prophetic spirit as oil.

2. God’s Will and Man’s Will

Ghazali’s conception of soul was based on Qur’anic teachings and Hadith as well as the opinions popular among the Sufis. But the main thing about the soul according to al-Ghazali is that the soul shares its nature with God. He quoted the Qur’anic verse: “Man is made in the image of God and "Allah breathed into man of His own spirit”.24 So, Ghazali says that soul is the reflection of divine spark. In other words, God and man share their nature such that knowing the nature of one helps in knowing the nature of other.

“Not only are man’s attributes a reflection of God attributes, but the mode of existence of man’s soul affords some insight into God’s mode of existence”.25

Furthermore, Ghazali maintains two types of world. One is world of command (amr) and other is the created world (khalq). The things that are devoid of quantity or dimension belong to world of command. So, the soul belongs to the world of command. The world of command rules over the
created world. This command is spiritual power which controls and regulates the created world. So Ghzali says that soul is spiritual unity and gives the life to the body and controls its actions.

Now the most important thing that Ghazali maintains about the nature of God is that He is primarily and essentially a Will. This position is radically different from the philosophers like Farabi and Ibn Sina who said that God is primarily and essentially a thought or Intelligence. They maintain that God is a thought thinking thought, as Aristotle had said. The God Himself recognizes Himself as the first intelligence.

Ghazali agrees with philosophers that God is the ultimate cause and ground of all beings. He is light of light, eternal wisdom, the creative truth. But above all these attributes, He is the eternal will. Ghazali differs from the other philosophers on this point. He maintains that God is not primarily a thought or intelligence, but He is primarily a will which is the cause of creation.

"The first principle", he says, "is an omnipotent and willing agent. He does what He wills, and ordains as He likes, and He creates the similar and dissimilar things alike, whenever and in whatever manner He wills." 26

So according to Ghazali Ultimate Reality is essentially will.

"The Originator of the heavens and the earth when He decreeth a matter He said to it: "Be" and it is." 27

God created the world through His will and sustains the world through His will. The knowledge of God is subordinate to His will. It is not the other way round as the philosophers believed:
"According to the philosophers, God wills the world because He thinks of it. According to al-Ghazali, "God has cognizance of the world because He wills it."  

Ghazali holds that this world is created by God through His will. But philosophers maintain that this world is eternal. In favour of eternity of the world they give certain arguments which relate to the cause and will. These arguments are: (1) Every effect has a cause, (2) the cause must be the action of some external force other than the effect, (3) the cause or an act of will when executed must immediately lead to the effect.

On the basis of these arguments it is said that there should be a final cause through which this world came into existence from non-existence. The final cause of world's coming into existence could not be a physical cause for a physical cause causing a physical event cannot be a final cause. But if world comes from an act of will of God at a particular time then God's will will also be determined by some other cause. God's causation of the world therefore must be from all eternity. And it must be so as an immediate effect of His eternal will. Ghazali accepts the view of the philosophers who maintain that He is the creator of the world from His eternal will though he says that the actual causation happened at a particular time which was also chosen by Him. Philosophers' assumptions that every effect has a cause and cause has necessarily its effect do not have a logical coerciveness about them. To believe that God's will does not have any cause or if it has then it has not come out from outside of His will, but in Himself, is not illegitimate. That an effect should follow a cause immediately is also not logically necessary. The notion of 'delayed
effect' is not logically contradictory. It is quite legitimate to think that God's will is eternal and an effect of that will has occurred at some point in time. The distinction should be clear between eternity of God's will and the eternity of the object of His will.

"God, for example, can eternally will that Socrates and Plato should be born at such and such a time and that the one should be born before the other."\(^{29}\)

So, to affirm the belief that God willed this world to come into existence at particular moment is not logically illegitimate. God chooses one particular moment for the world to come into existence. God's will is entirely undetermined. His will does not depend on anything outside of Him. Ghazali says that difficulty arises for the philosophers because they tried to understand God's will entirely in terms of man's will. But just as God's knowledge is not completely same as man's knowledge, similarly God's will is also not entirely same as man's will.

While affirming God's primary attributes as Will and denying the eternal, unwilled causation of world, Ghazali's aim was to ultimately affirm man's own will and deny the necessary causation of his actions. But before doing this he had to deny the causality in general. Ghazali wrote his book *Tahafutul Falasifah* to attack the philosophers on twenty points, one of which was the problem of causality. He refutes the alleged necessity of the causal connection maintained by the philosophers between the cause-event and effect-event. They held that there is a causal connection between two events and that connection is necessary.
But Ghazali does not accept this view. He rejects the necessary connection and holds that causal connection is not necessary.

“We do not believe that the connection between the so-called causes and effects is necessary”.30

He says that in a cause-effect situation the affirmation of one thing does not imply the affirmation of the other and the denial of the one thing does not imply the denial of the other thing. “This is not ‘that’ nor is ‘that’ one ‘this’.”31

So the existence of one thing and non-existence of that same thing is not supposed by the existence or non-existence of the other. He cited a number of actions which occurs in our daily life, which are visibly connected together but not caused. For example:

“The satisfaction of thirst after drinking; the satisfaction of hunger after eating; burning after coming into contact with fire; appearances of light after the rise of the sun; death after cutting off the head; regaining health after taking medicine; loosing of the bowels after taking a purgative; and so on to all the phenomena visibly connected together in Medicine, or Astrology, or Arts and Crafts.32

There appears to be a necessary connection in these cases. But in every case there is no necessary connection, and in every case one term does not logically imply the other. The apparent connections are not necessary causal relation nor conjunction, but is of the nature of succession.

Philosophers claim that fire is the agent of burning and that it cannot refrain from its nature i.e. burning when it comes into the object. But Ghazali says that fire cannot be the agent of burning because fire is inanimate object and has no power to produce the effect of burning.
The necessary causal connection is valid in the case of logical relations such as identity, implication and disjunction but not in natural relations. There is a difference between order of nature and order of thought. In the order of thought we deal only with logical entities. They are related to each other in the mind. Moreover, things are not connected with each other, only their ideas are connected in the mind. He says that the relation between fire and burning is not necessary relation because there is a possibility that it may or may not happen. Ghazali says that when a thing appears in a certain way again and again, mind perceives it as a norm and thinks that one thing occurs as the effect of the other one. It also then comes to be believe that there is a necessary causal connection between things.

Thus if we believe in the necessary relation between two things, it is only because the two terms which are in nature extrinsic to each other and because they repeat before us again and again, are conjoined in our consciousness. Causal necessity is nothing but a habit of our mind. It is only psychological necessity not a logical necessity.

Hence Ghazali holds that to think about miracles such as the fire not burning the body of Abraham when he was thrown into it, is not impossible. It is because either the attributes of the fire had changed or the attributes of the Abraham changed. We can reject the miracles if we prove they are logically impossible. But such type of proof can not be found. So denial of the miracles is sheer ignorance. Here it is necessary to know the nature of
cause. For the understanding of the principle of causality and happening of miracles. Ghazali describes the composite nature of a cause and the plurality of causes. He says that an effect has different contributory factors. Some of them are positive and some are negative. All of which is considered in conjunction. Moreover, the relation between cause and effect is based on observation. Our observation does not rule out the possibility that some effect might follow some cause other than apparent one. We also experience that there are number of causes for the same effect. Even we can not limit the number of causes.

"So there are many causes for the same effect and a cause is a sum total of many conditions".33

Hence the negation of the one particular cause will not be the negation of the effect. For negation of the effect will require negation of all the various causes. For negation of all causes it is necessary to possess a complete and exhaustive knowledge of all the causes and their conditions. But such type of knowledge or knowledge of all causes can never be had by human being.

Furthermore, Ghazali says that causes are only inert entities. Will and action are not attributed to them. Causes indeed act by the power and agency of God. That will is absolutely God's free will which works without constraint by any external law.

"Thus, the things to which God's power extends include mysterious and wonderful facts such as "elude the discernment of human sensibility". Indeed, God's power extends to all kinds of logical possibilities such as turning of a rod into a serpent, or the revivification of the dead".34
“No, the agent is He who creates the blackening, the combustion, and the extinction or turning into ashes of the piece of cotton set on fire. Fire is no agent, but a non-living thing; the action belongs to God who, ‘burns’ with or without the intermediacy of angel”.

Even resurrection of the bodies after the death is not impossible. Further, all things which related to paradise and hell as mentioned in the Quran are possible. In support of life after death, Ghazali argues in the following manner.

“Suppose a man is blind from birth, and has not heard of the difference between day and night. Now one morning he recovers his sight, and his eyelids open. It is quite probable that he will consider the opening of his eyelids as the agent of the forms of the colours seen by him for the first time. But better knowledge will come to him when the day is over and darkness approaches; then will he realize that seeing with the opening of the eyelids was not the whole of the matter and that the light of the Sun is the cause of the impression of colours on his eyes”.

According to Ghazali, whatever happened in this world happened only by God’s absolute free will. He is the only agent of all actions. So in the case of man's freedom of will we can say that his freedom of will for performing action is also regulated by God’s will. All actions of man are created by God and his freedom of will is also created by God. Man is not creator of his actions. But the other way of arguing may be that since God wills and man shares his nature with God, he can also be said to possess will.

It is clear that the affirmation of God’s will can act both ways i.e. as an argument both for and against the idea of man being a free agent. When we talk about God’s action one thing that immediately comes to mind is that everything or every event in the world is God’s action either by way of
creation or invention. There is no other creator except Him. He is thus also
the creator of man’s action. He created man’s actions without loosing His
power. God’s power is connected with movement of men. But though He
is the creator of man’s actions, He does not prevent him from his voluntary
actions. God created for man power as well as choice. Power is an attribute
of man, which is given him as a gift by God. Furthermore, motion is also
created by God that is acquired by man on the strength of power. Motion is
connected with the power. This power of motion can not be considered as
matter of compulsion; nor is it completely a matter of volition. There must
be a middle position relating to man’s voluntary action. His actions are
created by God but also by himself in so far as he has been given power to
create his actions. In other words, man has a will that nevertheless, also
comes under God’s will. Everything happened in this world and out of this
world according to His will.

“Good or evil, benefit or loss, belief or infidelity,
knowledge, or ignorance, success or failure, guidance or
misguidance; in or virtue, shirk or Iman come from Him”.37

It is only God who guides us and misguides us and He is not responsible
toward men but man is:

“He guides whom He wishes and misguides whom he
whishes. There is none to question Him of what He does,
but the people will be questioned”.38

When it is said that all actions of men are creation of God, can it be
concluded that the evil deeds are also the result of God’s will? The
question arises how God commands those things which He does not wish,
and how He prohibits those things which He wishes. To this Ghazali’s
answer is that there is a difference between command and will. He tried to clarify this difference with an example:

"Thus if a master beats his slave, the ruler rebukes the master for beating his slave, the master shows reason that his slave does not obey him. As a proof he orders his slave to arrange the bridle of his horse before the ruler though he knows that the slave will not obey it. If he does not order him, his objection before the ruler does not stand and if he wishes that his order should be obeyed it amounts to his murder. It is impossible".39

A basic principle related to God's action is that He is merciful to men when they find themselves in troubles. He is not such a being who imposed things on men. He only enjoins and prohibits leaving man free to follow or not follow. His compulsion on men is only about two things. One is about work which is obligatory. If I do follow it I will be rewarded and if I do not follow, I will be punished in my future life. Secondly, the negation of such a system of reward and punishment is impossible. God may indeed give punishment to men for the non-performance of an action that is beyond his capacity. If it were not so, then men would not pray to God: "O Our Lord, lay not on us that for which we have no strength".40

God also does whatever He wants, and it is not incumbent on Him to do only what is good for man. God's dealings are not unintelligible to men because God is not questioned for His doing but men are. (On the contrary, Mutazilites maintained that it is incumbent upon God to do whatever is good for man as they also insisted that God can command only those actions which are within the capacity of man.)
3. Knowledge, Will and Power

According to al-Ghazali an action can happen only under three conditions viz. knowledge, will and strength or power. As he says, “Action is not complete without three things - knowledge will and strength”.

Knowledge is the basis of action. It comes before action. We can even say that action is the result of knowledge. A man can not perform an action without knowing about it. So knowledge is a necessary factor for performing an action. But it may also happen that one knows about a particular action, and yet he does not perform the action. The performance of an action also requires a will to perform that action. Again it can also be seen that although man knows about a particular action and he has the will to do it, yet he cannot perform that action if he has not the power or strength for performing it. So power or strength is also a necessary condition for performing that particular action. Hence, knowledge, will, and strength are all necessary conditions for performing any action.

“Without knowledge of a thing, a man does not intend to have that thing. Without will or intention, there is no movement of physical organs to do that thing. So action is the fruit of will and will is the fruit of knowledge.”

Knowledge comes along with thought and recollections. It is apprehended by heart. Ghazali says that whatever mind intends it comes first in the heart in the form of thought. So Ghazali maintains that the ideas are fountainhead of all activity. These ideas have a tendency to express themselves in the given situation. In present moment they first generate a strong inclination, which is called by Ghazali al-Raghbah. These
inclinations are necessary if any action has to occur. They are followed by conviction (i'tqad) and conviction is followed by the will to act. The will finally incites power and then an action takes place.

Ghazali says that in this process the idea and inclination both are beyond complete control of man. So he maintains that the idea and inclination may come without man’s responsibility, but his reason is free to take decision and his will is also free to accept the decision of reason. This means that in some vital respects human being is free to do what he wills. But he has not complete control over it.

The ideas which are related to man’s will are of two kinds. Either they lead to good action or lead to evil action. Those ideas which lead to good action are known as Ilham or inspiration. Those that lead to evil action are known as waswas, i.e. whisperings of satan that is seduction. These two kinds of ideas are found in man’s nature due to two different elements that are ar-rabbaniya and ash-shaitaniya i.e. the divine and the satanic. These elements are in nature due to direct influences by forces of the cosmos that are themselves angelic and satanic. By divine influence man receives the good ideas called al-taufiq, the divine grace. But if man goes into opposite direction he receives the impact of the other forces known as al-khidhlan. The divine element is guided by ‘al-a’ql i.e. reason. Satanic element is guided by ‘ash shahwah’, i.e. apptition and al-ghadab i.e. self-assertion. Ghazali says that devil has many powers but the angel has only one i.e. reason.
In order to illustrate the whole process of how the occurrence of an action involves the four factors of knowledge, will, power and movement, he gives example of writing which he says is created by God in man in the form of a desire that arises in man to write down something. After that all the four things that are necessary for performing an act of writing begin to play their role. But though the four factors work in the order mentioned above their creation in man by God is in reverse order:

“He created the strength of movement in the hand of a writer after creation firstly of an attribute named strength, secondly after creation in his mind a firm determination and thirdly after creation owing to his determination in mind understanding and fourthly knowledge of cognition”.

It should also be remembered that these four things reside in man’s body that is their “abode” having originally arisen from the invisible world: which is itself a great mystery unfathomable by man.

According to Ghazali, the world consisted of three realities namely, the physical world (al-'alam al-mulk), the mental world (al-'alam al-jabrut) and the spiritual world (al-'alam al-malakut). The spiritual world is beyond the physical senses and cannot be comprehended by general understanding. It can be apprehended only by those who are enlightened. For Ghazali the reality of spiritual world is known directly. A deep study of al-'alam al-jabrut i.e. the world of the human mind (reason, will and power) reveals that man is free.

To explain and illustrate the problem of determinism and free will he narrates a parable in which he gives the details of long journey of a
devotee. The devotee sees the writing on white paper. He asks the paper that your face was white why do I find it now black? Paper answered why ask me this question? I have not made my face black but it is the ink that travelled on me and made my face black. Then he asked the ink about it. Ink answered you should not asked me. I lived peacefully in inkpot but it was pen who forcefully took me out and made marks on the paper. When the devotee asked this question to the pen, it answered why you don’t ask about it to hand and finger? I was only reed. Hand cut me off from my parent body, severed my head and dived it into inkpot. When asked, the hand, too, answered, I am nothing but a piece of flesh with blood. Have you seen a piece of flesh moving independently? Can a body move itself? I am a vehicle of strength. He rides over me and orders me to do a thing. Ask the power why he makes use of me? Then the devotee questioned the strength. Strength answered, do you think I ordered the hand for movement. I do not move it, nor do I order it. A representative comes to me and he compels me to do a thing. He wakes me up from sleep and compels me to do an act. Then he asked the will. Will answered, I do not rise myself, I am raised by the intellect i.e. the messenger of knowledge. I am subject to intellect and knowledge. You should ask intellect about it. But intellect excused himself by saying he was a lamp only and does not know who lighted it. Knowledge maintained that it was simply an inscription on the tabula rasa of mind, inscribed after the lamp of reason had been lighted. Thus he could not be considered the author of the inscription which may have been the work of some invisible pen. Then at that time doubt arose in devotee’s mind regarding the intellect’s answer.
He said I have passed many stages and every one attributed responsibility on the others. Nevertheless, there was pleasure in my quest. I find that everyone gives me a plausible reason. But your answer fails to satisfy me. As you say that you are a mere inscription recorded by a pen. But I have seen pen, ink and tablet. Pen is made of reed, ink is black mixture, tablet is wood and iron. I have seen the lamp which is lighted with the fire. But here I do not see the tablet, the lamp, the pen and the inscription as you talk about them. Then knowledge said to the devotee your means are scanty, your horse is fudged. Your provision is little and your conveyance is weak. It is better to leave your journey. Further, knowledge said to devotee, if you want to go ahead in your journey, then you have to travel the three worlds i.e. terrestrial world i.e. the objects which can be known through physical senses, the celestial world which is beyond the physical senses, and the intermediate world or the world of power.

"The celestial world begins when the Pen which records Knowledge on the heart becomes visible and man acquires unshaken faith of the reality of the unseen world. If you can not see the Pen then you better discontinue your journey."

"What has been created for a man has been made easy for him. Know that there are three hurdles in this path, material world, spiritual or unseen world and world of power and strength."

Ghazali says that the material world is easier to travel while the spiritual world is more difficult. One who walks upon the ground walks upon the material world. He who has a boat and embarks upon water, walks upon the world of strength. He who walks upon water without the help of any conveyance walks in the spiritual world.
The devotee’s eyes were opened as he tried to see the celestial pen. Knowledge again helped him by giving some further clues to have conception of the celestial world which was devoid of physical determination and limits. For example, the furniture of the house is according to the status of the resident. God does not have physical attributes. So His attributes are also transcendental. He is beyond space and time. His hand, pen, writing, speaking and so on are not similar with physical world of experience. Ghazali says that whoever has the right conception about Him, can understand Him and His attributes. You do not have right conception about Him. For apprehension of Him, you have to understand three categories of men. One is he who conceives Him as transcendental and believes that He is not only beyond all material limitation but also beyond the metaphor. Second one is he who conceives Him as an anthropomorphic being. Third category of men are those who believe Him as neither of two and yet both. They adopt middle position. It seems that you belong to third category. You believe that He is immaterial and yet you cannot have a transcendental conception of His hand, pen and Tablet. Then the devotee realized his shortcomings. The curtains from his eyes fell and the sight of knowledge dawned upon his heart. Now he asked the invisible pen, why you write science on the heart of man, by which will is produced and by will the powers and voluntary action come into existence? The invisible Pen asked the same question to the hand, which was the cause of those activities. Hand, in turn, asked the power. The devotee then asked the power. Power replied, I am merely a quality, you
should better ask the possessor of the quality. Then devotee asked the omnipotent and, in reply, he heard the voice of omnipotent,

“He cannot be asked what He does, and they shall be asked”.

That means Allah is self-subsisting. All his creatures are responsible to Him and dependent on Him. There is no other being to whom He can be responsible or on whom He can be dependent. God is not responsible to man, but man is responsible to God.

4. Arguments for Free Will

From the point of view of having a free will Ghazali divides human kind in certain categories. The first one are those whose character is unformed. They have no ability to distinguishing between good and evil, right and wrong. They are ignorant. They have no self-consciousness and no moral character. They have neither will nor belief. The character of such type of men can be improved easily. They are in need of some guidance, a determination through which they could walk on right path.

The second kind of men are those who are under the control of passions. They possess quality of distinguishing between good and evil. They know the rational self is the only true self. Although they realize the rational self is real self yet they follow their lower self, because they do not customarily perform right action. Ghazali says that since they have knowledge, they can be reformed of their character by off shutting their evil habits, and cultivating the virtuous habits. Such types of men are
amenable to good influence, if they have the will to improve their character.

Third type of persons do evil addictively. They think their ways are good and to act according to them is absolutely necessary. Their self-consciousness consists only of the animal desires and their rational self has been suppressed. To improve their character is almost impossible. Because the way they think is not right.

Fourth type of people feel proud of their evil doing and of leading others astray and regard it as a thing of honour. Improvement of such type of persons is not quite possible. They can walk on right path only through the divine power. Divine power can bring revolutionary change under these circumstances. We find in the holy Qur'an a description about the third and fourth type persons.

"God has a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing, and over their eyes is a covering, and there is a great chastisement for them".47

The first type of people is called ignorant. Second type is called ignorant and misguided. The third type are ignorant, misguided, and wicked. The fourth one is called misguided, wicked and devilish. Ghazali holds that the fact that human character can be changed and improved shows that man is a free agent. He says that human character is capable of improvement.

Like the four classes of man in this world men can also be divided into four classes in the next world. These are: (i) one class for destruction,
(ii) one class for punishment, (iii) one class for salvation, (iv) one class for success. Ghazali explains the difference between these classes of men with the help of an analogy:

"a certain powerful king in order to establish his kingdom on firm basis kills some people and they are the destroyed people. He punishes some persons for a certain time but he does not kill them. They are those who receive punishment. He releases some persons who are recipients of salvation. He gives rewards to some persons who are successful".⁴⁸

Ghazali says that if king is just, he divides classes of the men on the basis of justice. He will kill only those who deny his sovereignty. He will punish only those who have got defects in their service to him. He will praise only those who admit the king’s rank and position. He will reward only those who spend their lives in his service. From this it would appear that free will is in man’s hand. But, finally, it is God who will destroy people, give punishment, give salvation and give reward. But then the question is how to know the nature of man’s free will. For the answer of this question, Ghazali says that people are like blind men who go beyond their powers while trying to understand the reality of freewill. Some people say that man has got freedom of will. Some believe that man has got freedom of will but that does not play the role in determination of action. Some others adopt middle position and hold that man’s actions are subject to efforts. Ghazali says that if spiritual world would have been opened for them, it would have been disclosed to them every opinion is true from one standpoint or the other. But God does not want it. God knows both open and secret worlds. He has not disclosed His secret even
to the prophets with whom He is pleased. A man of spiritual world knows only that God is the creator and doer of everything.

Ghazali next talks of three types of action viz. natural action (al-fi’l al-tabi’i), intentional action (al fi’l al-iradi) and voluntary action (al fi’l al-ikhtiyari).

i. Natural action (al fi’l al-tabi’i) : The natural actions are those which happen without man’s will such as breathing, thinking and so on. In these actions man’s will does not partake. They happen rather automatically.

ii. Intentional action (al-fi’l al-iradi) : Intentional actions are those which are done in the self-protection or for avoidance of the evil by the consciousness. Although they occur with will, they are yet spontaneous and sudden i.e. without deliberation. For example, if a man comes toward you with drawn sword, your hands will be raised automatically in self-protection. It is not a blind action but happens with consciousness. When a drawn sword, as Ghazali says, comes towards someone, that knowledge comes in mind, for the avoidance of the danger the hand rises against the sword for the protection of himself. Both natural as well as the intentional actions are necessary and involuntary but the difference between these two is that intentional action is preceded by perception and knowledge while in natural actions perception of the thing is not present.

iii. Voluntary action (al-fi’l al-ikhtiyari) : Those actions are said to be voluntary in which an alternative is possible and reason makes a choice to do it in one way rather than the other way. For example, committing
suicide or stealing money or giving charity etc. In such cases things are presented to the mind in two ways. First one is those actions which are presented in our observation without deliberation agreeable or disagreeable. There is no alternative present in our mind. Second one are those actions in which alternative is present in the mind and mind has capacity to make a selection. For example, if a needle comes towards our eyes then for the protection and for the avoidance of danger we close the eyelids without hesitation and deliberation. Although this action happened with intention, it happened without hesitation or deliberation. So, those actions in which we have choice or alternatives are said to be voluntary actions. The word ‘al-ikhtiyar’, is derived from ‘Khair’, which means ‘good’. Hence ‘al-ikhtiyar’ means the choice of a thing which appears to be good to the reason.

Now, here the question is how is man able to do a thing if he wishes and cannot do if he does not wish to do it. The answer of this question is that in natural and intentional actions man has no power or control over them. To explain this point, Ghazali describes three kinds of work.

“(1) The first kind of man’s work is natural, for instance if he places his foot in water, it becomes separate, (2) The second kind of man’s work is natural wilful work, such as taking breath, passing stool and urine, taking food and drink. (3) Third kind of man’s work is action of strength and power, such as walking, talking etc”.49

Ghazali says man has no power of control over first two types of actions. Whenever someone stands in the water it becomes separated. It is a general
rule that whenever a thing is heavy it separates the lighter body from its own place. Heaviness and lightness is not matter of human will. Similarly, man cannot stop his breath after passage of time. The process of breathing is going on automatically. Taking breath, heaviness and lightness and so on are not subject to man’s will.

“Similarly the wilful acts of man are not subject to volition. Similarly the acts of volition are not subject to the will of man”.50

Furthermore, Ghazali says wilful action occurs in accordance to natural dictation of God’s law. For example, if someone takes a needle and tries to pierce that needle into other’s eyes, the other person will suddenly close his eyes. Although this action happens according to one’s will, it also happens in accordance to God’s natural law.

The third kind of action occurs with strength or power such as writing, walking, talking etc. These actions require strength. These actions are matter of one’s will.

“It is said of these actions that a man do these things if he wills and does not do them if he does not will”.51

Although it is said about voluntary action that it happens or does not happen according to man’s will, but, from this, one should not conclude that these actions are also subject to volition and are not subject to man’s will. Ghazali gave the reason of this thinking. He says man’s will comes from the order of intellect or a’qil which says to will or not to will this particular action because it is profitable to you or harmful to you. You do this or refrain from this. Intellect’s order to the will are of two types.

“(1) One kind of things inform you openly or secretly that a particular action is beneficial to you. (2) Another
kind of things informs you after mature thoughts and efforts that a particular action is beneficial to you".\textsuperscript{52}

For example, if anybody pierced a needle into your eye you know that to remove it is beneficial to you. The will here makes its appearance along with knowledge. You close your eyes and understand that closing your eyes is beneficial to you without any thinking. The knowledge ordered will to close your eyes and power comes in your eyes to close up them. So this is the process through which man knows particular action will be beneficial or not. If you understand that particular action is beneficial to you then knowledge arouses will. This is called real will through which the will power arises. All of these i.e. knowledge, will and power together determine whether this action is beneficial or harmful, right or wrong. Without knowledge, will does not arise and without will the power remains dormant.

Ghazali’s description of action as being of three types was in continuation of a similar distinction made earlier by other thinkers. Ghazali’s own teacher Juwayni maintains that an action produced by man is something that is outside his own body. The second type of action which Ghazali called intentional action, Asha’ri and Juwayni have described as “necessary” action and in the support of this necessary action they gave the example of the movements of trembling and shivering. The third type of action which Ghazali described as action of choice or voluntary action is exactly same as in Asha’ri and Juwayni. They however illustrate it by acts of going and coming instead of writing as Ghazali did. Similarly, Ash’ari
and Juwayni held that God is the creator of all these three types of actions and man is only an acquirer. This is same as Ghazali had thought.

“Ghazali tries to show that, though all the three types of human action enumerated by him are, as he says, “in reality the same with respect to necessity (al-idtirar) and compulsion (al-jabr)” by which he means that they are all created by God, still the first of these three types of action is due both to compulsion and to choice, that is to say, man has a part in it”.

“That man is compelled to do an act means that the action comes from a foreign strength or power, and not from within himself. Action with power means that he is an object of will.”

Ghazali tries to show man’s position in performing action. He says that fire has power and burns compulsorily. So it can be said to be guided by external agency. But we know that God’s action is the result of His absolute will. Man has got position between these two. That means his action is not completely guided by external agency or by some other power. Similarly, he does not perform an action the way it is done by God. The man has got an intermediary position. God creates power and will within man. So for this reason man is not completely guided by others like a material object. Ghazali says that man’s action cannot completely be controlled.

“Hence man’s action is not opposite to man’s freedom or dependence. God’s action is absolutely free and wilful with power. But His will and power are not subject to thinking and efforts like us.”

Furthermore, Ghazali says that man’s is a part of action of choice by God and that action is different from volitional action or intentional action. He compares between these two kinds of actions. He says that action of choice
such as writing, walking etc. is created by God in man. He creates in man
this action through four things, namely, knowledge (i'lm), will (irada),
power (quvvah) and movement. Both the action of choice and intentional
action starts with knowledge. Knowledge gives the judgement that a
particular action will be beneficial to you or not. Through knowledge will
arises for doing that action. Ghazali tries to show that, although both types
of actions start with knowledge and will but the effects are different in
these two actions. In intentional action like the closing of the eyelids when
the needle is pierced, knowledge judges that closing of eyes will be
beneficial to you at the moment. One closes his eyes without perplexity
and hesitation, without deliberation and cognition.

"so that this kind of action, he says, "takes place by the
will", that is to say, simply by the will, for the will acts
simultaneously with the instantaneous knowledge".56

Ghazali used the term irada in the sense of an instinctive action. He gives
the example of lamb's having an instinctive fear of the wolf, and its
instinctive running away from the wolf without thinking and deliberation.
In the case of voluntary action or action of choice like an act of writing, on
the other hand, he says man does not perform that action instantaneously.
In the former, man does not think immediately whether this action will be
good or harmful, should give benefit or not, while in voluntary action, the
action happens slowly, hesitatingly and deliberately.

"The action of the will in such a case takes place slowly,
hesitatingly and only when, after "deliberation and
cognition" with the aid of the "discerning faculty and the
intellect", man has come to know whether the action will
be beneficial or harmful".57
Hence for Ghazali man's same will acts differently in these two actions. In intentional acts it acts without choice while in voluntary actions that same will acts with choice.

About knowledge in the case of voluntary action, he used word 'knowledge' in the sense of "comprehension" (idrak) and "cognition" (ma'rifah). While by irada he means "a strong and decisive inclination (mayl kawi yjazim), and calls it intention (kasa). Further, he used the word "subservient" in the sense that a thing is conditioned as being subservient to the condition of the other.

"The incitement of the will is made subservient by the judgement of the intellect and sense perception, the power is subservient to the incitement of the will, and the movement is subservient to the power".\(^{58}\)

Further he says that all these things are determined by a divine necessity. Though human beings are not aware about these things, man is only an abode (mahall) or a channel of these things. When it is said man is an abode that means the action is created in him by God.

"The sense in which man is compelled is that all this is indeed produced within him but produced by something other than himself and not by himself, and the sense in which he is the possessor of choice is that he is the abode (mahall) of a will which takes place in him by compulsion after the judgement of the intellect that the action which is to follow is good, pure, and beneficial, the judgement of which, too, having taken place by compulsion".\(^{59}\)

Hence man does action under compulsion along with choice. Compared to the act of fire burning that is pure compulsive act and the act of God that is pure action of choice, man has got intermediary position between two extremes.
5. Will and Motive (*Niyah*)

Related with the question of ‘will’ is the psychological event of motive or *niyah*. According to Ghazali, the motive is not an expression by mouth or voice but something that happens in the mind. It is a mental occurrence that is finally expressed by mouth. When we offer the *salah* (prayer) and utter the sacred verses without relating them to mind, they are mere verbal utterances and carry no meaning. Such expressions will be same as to say, “I love so and so” without knowing the meaning of this sentence. Expression of the mouth and intention of the mind should be same. If they are not same then the former will be false. Suppose, a man marries a girl for the purpose of satisfying his sexual desire and not with an intention to get son. But he says that I marry the girl for the purpose of getting son. Naturally, his statement will be false. Here his intention is merely an expression of mouth not of mind. Motive determines the course and quality of one’s actions. Ghazali quotes the great saint Ibn *Sirin* who did not offer the namaz over the dead body of Hazrat Hasan Basri. He gave the reason that the intention of namaz janaza did not as yet arise in his mind. Similarly, when great saint Sufiyan Sawri was told that he should offer the namaz janaza of Ahmed b. Sulaiman who was a learned man of Kufa, he said: “Had I had the intention, I could have performed it”. Another example quoted by Ghazali is that of great saint Taus who was requested to pray for the people. He replied in the same vein saying “when I will, I do it”.

It is clear from the above illustrations that for these saints *niyah* or motive was not only an expression which is expressed by mouth, but it is
an expression which is expressed by mouth but is in fact an intention of the mind. It is a current flowing from Allah. Sometimes it is easy and sometimes it becomes difficult. It is easy for those whose heart inclines toward religious matters. He feels easy for doing good deeds. It is difficult for those whose minds are inclined towards evil deeds. They have to face difficulty for performing good deeds. Moreover, Ghazali says that we find different motives in man's service to God. Some peoples do good in order to getting happiness in paradise. If they do divine service with the motive of pleasing God and no other motive their intention will be said to be pure intention. Ghazali says that the most honorable persons are those who perform good deed for the sake of Him.

"Rather they call their Lord morning and evening only for His pleasure. They will get rewards according to their intentions. When they will be blessed with His sight, they will think the sight of the beautiful Hurs very little." Further, Ghazali says that God gives reward to pure motives of man. If we do any work with pure motive, God will help us. In order to explain this, he narrates the story of a saint of Israil. When he works for the sake of God, devil is unable to overpower him, but when he works to satisfy his worldly desires devil overpowers him.

A saint had to his credit divine service for long long years. One day some people were worshipping a tree besides Allah. At this, the saint got angry and went to cut it with an axe. In the meantime, the devil came in the form of an old man and asked him: Where are you going? The saint said: I am going to cut off this tree. The devil said: Are you in this thought? You have come down to do this leaving a side your Divine
The saint said: This work is also included in Divine service. The devil said: I will not permit you to cut down this tree. At this he fell down upon the saint but the latter overpowered him, threw him down on the ground and sat upon his chest.\(^6\)

The devil said: Desist from this action or I will kill you. At this he let off the devil who said to him: O saint, Allah has taken over this responsibility from you. He has not made it compulsory for you. You yourself do not worship this tree and the affairs of others have not devolved on you. This is the duty of Prophets. Had He willed, He would have certainly sent a Prophet to the inhabitants of this place and ordered him to cut down this tree. Then the saint said: To cut down this tree is also a part of my duty. The saint then fell upon the devil and threw him away and got on his chest. The devil again having been discomfited said to him: There is an affair between you and me which is good and beneficial for you. The saint asked him what it was. The devil said: Let me be sure and then I will tell you of it. Thereafter he let him off and the devil said to him: you are a poor man, you have got no property. You are a burden upon your friends and relatives. Perhaps you wish to get more honour than your brethren, to get more sympathy from your religious men and you do not want to depend on the people. The saint said: Yes, I hope for that. The devil said: In that case, turn away from this affair. I will place two dinars every night near your bed. When you will get up at dawn, you will take them and spend them for you and your family and gift a portion to your brothers. This act of yours will be more beneficial to you and the Muslim
public than the cutting down of this tree. This tree was planted and there will be no good if you cut down this tree. At this, the saint began to ponder and said: This old man has spoken the truth. I have not been ordered to cut down this tree by God. I will incur no sin if I do not cut down this tree. Then he turned his mind from this action of cutting down the tree.

Thereafter the saint went to his place of worship and spent the night. At dawn, he found two dinars near his head and took them. Next day also this happened. This continued for three days. On the fourth day, he did not find the dinars near his head and became very much enraged. He took his journey to cut down the tree. The devil came to him in the form of an old man and said: where are you going? He said: I am going to cut down the tree. The devil said: By God, you will not be able to cut it down, you will also not find your way. Thereupon the saint fell upon him but the saint became just like a sparrow between his two legs. The devil then sat upon his chest and said: if you want to live, get away from here or else I will cut you to pieces. The saint being helpless looked to and fro and said: O gentle man you have defeated me. Let me now go. The devil said: Question me now how you have first overpowered me and thereafter I have overpowered you. The devil said: At first you became enraged for the sake of Allah alone and your sole intention was to get success in the hereafter. So God made me subservient to you. But now you have become enraged for your worldly propensities and desires and so I overpowered you.
From this story we can see that if man has pure motive he can win, if he has no pure motive he can not. Ghazali here mentions the case of great saint Ma’ruf Karkhi who

"used to beat himself and say: Take recourse to form intention, you will then get salvation." 62

According to Yakub, a man of pure soul is one “who keeps his good deeds concealed as he keeps his sins concealed is a man of pure intention”. 63

About intention Solaiman said: “He is blessed who takes one step in the way of Allah”. 64 Hazrat Omar wrote to Imam Abu Musa Ashari; “Allah is sufficient for a man whose intention is pure”. 65

In order to further clarify the idea of motive, Ghazali takes help of a story of a person who traveled for jihad. The man says to himself:

“I was traveling by sea for a Jihad or holy war. Someone of us wanted to sell his bag and I thought that I should purchase this bag and sell it for a higher price in a city. Then I purchased it but dreamt in that night that two persons got down from heaven and one of them said to the other: Write down the names of the warriors in the way of Allah. The other said: so and so came out only to take a journey. So and so made jihad only for fame. So and so came to make merchandise. So and so came out only for the sake of Allah. I at once exclaimed: O Allah, I have not come out to make merchandise. I have got no such commodities, I have come out for jihad. Then the other person reported: O man, you intended to make profit after purchasing a bag yesterday. Thereafter I wept bitterly and said: Don’t enrol me among the merchants. The man said to his companion; Write, so
and so came out as a warrior in the way of Allah. Then he purchased a bag for profit. The result then rest on Allah.\textsuperscript{66}

Ghazali further discusses about sincere intention (\textit{ikhlas}). He says that everything is mixed with other thing. If one thing is not mixed with other thing, it is said to be pure. As St. Yahya b. Muaz said that sincere action separates an action from its faults as milk separates itself from urine and blood. Some great man said, wisdom is just like a seed, action just like crop and \textit{ikhlas} or sincerity same as water for irrigation. The great Saint Susi maintains that among the actions of man Allah desires only his sincerity. \textit{Ikhlas} means purity. Purity is the opposite of mixture. Purity means "without share", Purity in oneness of God means there is no partner of Allah in his attributes as well as his existence. If one admits his partner his action is called \textit{shirk}. Ghazali says that a person who wants to be near to the God, his intention should be pure. If a man wants to work for the sake of Allah he has to leave the following intentions: "(1) to have good health in fasting, (2) to give relief from labour in setting free a slave, (3) to recoup health in journey for Haj, (4) to fight for any other purpose than to please God, (5) to pray Tahajjud to guard the family and properties at night, (6) to acquire money or fame by education, (7) to acquire money by writing books, (8) to make ablution to make oneself pure or to purity the bodily limbs, (9) to make I’tiqaf in mosque in order to get relief from house rent, (10) to give to a beggar so that he may not beg again, (11) to do an act to gain name and fame or to have status in society."\textsuperscript{67}
Now, Ghazali describes three kinds of action relating to the intention or will, viz., sinful action, pious action and lawful actions.

i. Sinful actions: Ghazali says that if one’s intention is good but he does sinful action his sinful action cannot turn into virtuous action. Similarly, if one’s intention is good while performing an action but the means is not good then the action again cannot be considered as pious action.

“If you backbite a man to please another, if you give to a beggar the food of another person, if you make gift of illegal property to construct a mosque, bridge or such charitable object, you will not absolve yourself from the sinful act although your intention is good and pious.”

So if your intention is good then your means also should be good for performing a pious action.

ii. Pious actions: If one does not have good intention while performing good action, then this kind of action is not considered as pious and there is no reward for it. If you have a number of good intentions including to please God, then the reward increases.

“For instance, to keep sitting in a mosque is a good act but it admits of many intentions — (i) to hope for sight of God as mosque is considered as a house of God where God can be seen, for the Holy Prophet said : He who keeps sitting in a mosque, meets with God, (2) to wait for the next prayer, for the Prophet said he who waits for prayer will get the same reward as that of a man who has prayed, (3) to keep the bodily organs from sinful acts. (4) to concentrate all thoughts upon Allah, (5) to be engaged in the remembrance of Allah, (6) to enjoin good works and prohibit evils, (7) to get benefit from those who fear Allah”.

iii. Lawful actions: One can increase reward in lawful action through multiplying the number of good intentions.
Ghazali says that lawful things are uncountable. A pious man is one who has good intentions in everything, even eating, drinking, sleeping etc.

6. Theory of Acquisition

Ghazali has discussed the problem of free will and acquisition in three places in his book *Ihya Ulum-id-Din* i.e. *Kitab Kawaid wal-‘Aka‘id*, *Kitab al-Taubah* and *Kitab al-Tauhid wal-Tawakkul*.

He starts the discussion with the statements on which all predestinarians are agreed i.e. “that God, who created man and his powers and his movements, created also all his actions and that all his actions remain dependent upon God’s power”.

In favour of this common belief, he gives two arguments:

“since the power of God is perfect and unrestricted, it can not but be that the actions of man are created by God. Second, since man’s actions are dependent upon the movements of his body and all the movements of man’s body are by their essence equally dependent upon the power of God, there is no reason for differentiating in this respect some movements, called actions, from other movements.”

The second argument referred to those libertarians who distinguish among actions and maintain that God has power upon certain actions and does not have power over certain actions. For example, God has power over movements and rests of man. But he has no power over belief and unbelief. Further, they distinguish between man’s act and God’s act. They hold that noble acts are created by God and base acts are created by man. According to them, “God created at once the power (*al-kudrah*) and the
object of power (al-makdur) and He created at once the choice (al-ikhtiyar) and the object of choice (al-mukhtar)."  

According to Ghazali, “power”, means the power to move and he used the word in the general sense of power of action, and power of choice. The latter included the choice between moving and not moving. Further, “object of power” and “object of choice”, meant according to him a movement which is performed by the power to move which is result of choice to move and not to move. In other words, we can say that it is a voluntary movement or voluntary action. He says that in every voluntary action of man three things are involved, i.e., the power to act, the choice between moving and not moving, and the action performed by the power as a result of the choice. He said that all these three things are created by God in man. Ghazali distinguishes between created power to move and created movement which is created by God in man. He say:

“The power is an attribute (wasf) of man and a creation of God but is not an acquisition (kasb) of man, whereas the movement is a creation of God and an attribute (wasf) of man but is also an acquisition of man, for it is created as an object of power by [another] power [namely, the power to choose]; which is to him [also] an attribute.”

The power then is an attribute of man, but not an acquisition of man, and movement is an attribute of man but also an acquisition. Both are created by God.

“In short, acquisition is any movement of man preceded regressively by a power to move and by a power to choose, that is, to will, to use that power to move, plus the assumption that the movement itself
and the power to move and the will to use that power to move are all created by God".74

Ghazali says that acquisition is regarded as a movement which is created by God. It cannot be regarded as compelled act nor can it be said to be a free act. It cannot be said to be a compelled act, because how could a movement be regarded as compelled act when man has consciousness or has a power to distinguishing between a movement which is the object of power as the raising of hand and the movement of the uncontrollable trembling hand. The movement "raising hand" is non-compulsive while the movement that is trembling hand is pure compulsion. Further asking how could be a man the author of his free act, Ghazali says that for the authorship of one's actions, knowledge and control of every action are necessary. But man has neither foreknowledge nor control over his actions in different circumstances. Hence these two extremes are not liable to acceptance. He therefore adopts the middle position, that is of acquisition.

"Since both these extremes are untenable, there remains only to adopt a middle course with regard to the belief under consideration, namely, that the movement is determined by the power of God by way of creation and by the power of man by way of another kind of relationship that which is designated by the term acquisition (ikhtisab)".75

So, according to al-Ghazali, man has two kinds of power i.e. power of choosing and power of action and these two powers are created by God. Ghazali's view on acquisition is identical with that of Najjar and Asha'ri.

Ghazali said that man holds the balance between determinism and freedom. He says that uniform succession of events is determinant of man's action but his choice which is an essential element of will is his
own. He says that acquisition \((kasb)\) is distinguished from necessity \((jabr)\) and freedom \((ikhtiyar)\). He gave the example of fire. Fire burns by necessity. Man may acquire fire through appropriate methods but God is the ultimate cause of fire. Now the question is if it is said that God is the ultimate cause, why should there be causal connection in the orderly succession of events? To answer this question, it is necessary first to understand the nature of causation. According to Ghazali nothing causes anything. Only antecedents have consequents. God alone is the efficient cause. Causality can be understood as the relation between two events which are conjoined like the relation between the condition and the conditioned. Certain conditions one can understand by common understanding but there are conditions which are understood only by those who see through the light of intuition. Ghazali says that there is divine purpose in linking between antecedents and consequents. God does not create this world at random. There is a succession of events without any break or irregularity.

"Verily", says the Quran, "we did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them in sport. We did not create them both but with truth, but most of them do not know".\(^{76}\)

God created this world according to a well arranged plan. The uniform succession of events is not at random. Again the question is if God is efficient cause how responsibility lies upon man. Does an effect have two causes? Ghazali says that the word ‘cause’ can be used in two different senses.
“It is said that the ruler killed a certain man. In another meaning it is said that the executioner killed the man. The meaning is the same as by order of the ruler, the executioner killed the man. In other words, the ruler killed the man”.  

God is the efficient cause of action. But, at the same time, man is also the cause of action as he is the source of the manifestation of uniform succession of events. In the case of executioner killing the man we have the real causal connection. While in the case of man being killed by the king’s order we find the relation holding between antecedent and the consequent. This relation can also be described as the relation of condition and conditioned. In Qur’an we find several verses with a clear meaning of word ‘cause’ that show the word is used in different senses:

“The angel of death, who is given charge of you shall cause you to die: then, to your lord you shall be brought back”

“Allah takes the souls at the time of their death”

“Have you considered what you sow?”

“We pour down the water, pouring it down in abundance. The cleave the earth; cleaving is asunder. Then we cause to grow therein the grain”.

“Fight them; Allah will chastise them by your hand and bring them to disgrace”.

“So you did not slay them, but it was Allah who slew them, and thou didst not smite when thou didst smite, but it was Allah who smote, that He might confer upon the Believers a good gift from Himself”.

These verses show that the word cause signifies creative power and that cause must be applied to God alone. But man’s power is the image of God’s power. The word is applied to him metaphorically. As the death of a man is caused by the hand of the executioner and by the king’s order, so
the word 'cause' has been applied only in its secondary sense for man. God alone is the real efficient cause and the word must be applied to Him in its root sense, i.e., power.

Now the question is why man is rewarded for his good deeds and punished for evil deeds, Ghazali says that before this discussion it is necessary to understand the nature of reward and punishment. He says everything possesses particular natural properties. For example, in the science of medicine a certain medicine possesses a certain quality. If a man takes poison, by its natural property it will kill the man. Then he has no right to ask the question, why poison kills him. Similarly, good and bad actions are invariably followed by pleasure and pain respectively. Man gets reward of pleasure for good actions and is punished for evil action. The good action is like nectar and evil works like elixir. The properties of actions have been discovered, as discoveries are made in medicine. The saints and prophets are the physicians of the heart. So man should listen them for the discovery of good and bad action. If one does not listen them he will suffer. Ghazali explains this idea with the help of a parable.

"A certain king sent a horse, a robe of honour, and traveling expenses to one of his suzerains in a distant land. Although the king had no need of his services, the royal gift was a favour shown to his suzerain, so that he might come to king's court and be happy in his presence. If the suzerain understands the king's intention from the nature of the gift and utilizes it properly with a grateful heart, he will wait on the king and live happily; but if he misuses the gift or takes no heed of it, he will prove an ungrateful wretch."
The aim of this parable is to tell that we should recognize the mercy of God and should not misuse it. God bestowed the gift i.e. life with bodily organs and mental and moral faculties. So we should utilize them properly. If we misuse them and do not give due regard to them, then we shall be kafirs or ungreatful. As Quranic verses show;

"Verily", We created man in the best make. Then We render him the lowest of the low, except those who believe and do good, so they shall have a reward never to be cut off".85

These verses show that there is no fault in Allah’s creation. Allah gave to man purest and best nature, and it is man’s duty to preserve the pattern on which Allah has made him. If man rebels against Allah, and follows after evil, he will be abased to the lowest possible position. Those who follow Allah’s law will reach the high and noble destiny intended for them. That reward will not be temporary but unfailing.

Now the question is if all creation, all good and evil has sprung from God, can we still say that man has got freedom of action. The answer is yes.

"Man has got freedom of action but it is not opposed to our opinion that everything that is the creation of God and man’s freedom of will is also the creation of God".86

He explains this statement with the help of the example of eating.

“For instance God created hand, tongue and delicious food. He created in mind this knowledge that the greed will be pacified by this food. He created also the contrary thought whether it would be good or injurious if the greed for food is satisfied and whether this kind of food is agreeable or not. He also created this understanding whether it has got any bar or not. If
these causes are united, there comes the will to take that food. As a result of two conflicting thoughts and the greed for food, will comes in and that is called freedom of will. When all the elements are fulfilled, there comes will. When God creates the will and makes it firm. He allows his sound hand to extend towards food, as the unification of will and strength leads compulsorily to action. These two things, will and strength, are the creation of God”.

We have seen before that Ghazali explained causality as a succession of events. Rather than being due to causal relation between them they were due to a custom (‘adah). God creates things continuously in the same order of succession. He used the term ‘adah for the term sunnah.

“These created things, however, follow one another in an order of sequence in accordance with which God’s custom (sunnah) proceeds in His creation, and in this procedure of God’s custom there is no change”.

With regard to the problem of free will, he tries to show that this conception of continuous creation is a divine custom. He says that divine custom means one created thing is the condition of the other created thing. One must precede and the other must follow:

“So everything is created by God and one thing of his creation depends upon another thing. For instance, will comes after understanding, understanding comes after life and body comes before life. So the creation of body is necessary for life but not life for body. Similarly, creation of life is necessary for creation of understanding and not creation of understanding for life. Understanding does not come if there is no life. Understanding has been created to make will firm and not for creation of will. Will does not come without life and understanding”.
Further, the succession of continuously created things in fixed and immutable order is determined by God’s generosity. Human being also is subject to the same order as the other event of the world.