

FRIDAY SERMON

22 August 2014

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

After reciting the *Tashahhud*, the *Ta'uz* and the first chapter *Al Fatiha* of the Holy Quran, Imam Zafrullah Domun said:

Today *incha* Allah I will speak to you about what Hazrat Masih Maood (as) has taught us about the purpose of our life.

The text that I will be quoting from is “*Islami Asool ki filasafi*” which has been translated as “**The philosophy of the teachings of Islam**”. Before we start with the text let me tell you about its background so that you might be in a better position to appreciate its merits.

By the end of the nineteenth century in India there were many religions vying for supremacy. A person by the name of Swami Sadhu Shugan Chandra had spent three or four years of his life attempting to reform the Kaaisth Hindu caste. In 1892 he came to the conclusion that unless people were gathered together under one roof, his efforts would be in vain. He therefore proposed to convene a religious conference, with the first one taking place in 1892 in Ajmer.

In 1896, considering Lahore to be a suitable venue, he began preparations for the second such religious conference. Swami Sahib appointed a committee to oversee the arrangements. This committee sent invitations to the representatives of several religions inviting them to come forward to explain the teachings of their religion on the following five questions:

1. The physical, moral and spiritual states of man.
2. What is the state of man after death, i.e. the hereafter?
3. What is the true purpose of man's existence on earth and how can it be achieved?
4. What are the effects of one's deeds in this life and the afterlife?
5. What are the sources of divine knowledge?

The conference was due to be held from 26 to 28th December 1896. On 21st December Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) published a pamphlet entitled *A Grand Piece of News for Seekers after Truth* in which among other things he said:

“In the conference of Great Religions which will be held in Lahore Town Hall on the 26th, 27th and 28th of December 1896, a paper written by this

humble one, dealing with the excellences and miracles of the Holy Quran, will be read out. This paper is not the result of ordinary human effort but is a sign among the signs of God, written with His special support. It sets forth the beauties and truths of the Holy Quran and establishes like the noon-day sun that the Holy Quran is in truth God's own Word and is a book revealed by the Lord of all creation. Everyone who listens to this paper from the beginning to the end, to my treatment of all the five themes prescribed for the conference, will, I am sure, develop a new faith and will perceive a new light shining within himself and will acquire a comprehensive commentary on the Holy Word of God. This paper of mine is free from human weakness, empty boasts and vain assertions. I have been moved by sympathy for my fellow human beings to make this announcement, so that they should witness the beauty of the Holy Quran and should realize how mistaken are our opponents in that they love darkness and hate light. God, the All-Knowing, has revealed to me that my paper will be declared supreme over all other papers. It is full of the light of truth, wisdom and understanding which will put to shame all other parties, provided they attend the conference and listen to it from beginning to end.....

I saw in a vision that out of the unseen a hand was laid on my mansion and by the touch of that hand a shining light emerged from the mansion and spread in all directions. It also illumined my hands. Thereupon someone who was standing by me proclaimed in a loud voice: *Allahu Akbar, Kharibat Khaibar* (God is Great, Khaibar has fallen).

The interpretation is that by my mansion is meant my heart on which the heavenly light of the verities of the Holy Quran is descending, and by Khaibar are meant all the perverted religions which are afflicted with paganism and falsehood, in which man has been raised to occupy the place of God, or in which divine attributes have been cast down from their perfect station. It was thus disclosed to me that the wide publication of this paper would expose the untruth of false religions and the truth of the Quran will spread progressively around the earth till it arrives at its climax. From this vision my mind moved towards the reception of revelation and I received the revelation: '**God is with you, and God stands where you stand.**' This is a metaphor conveying the assurances of Divine support"

In fact, whatever Hazrat Masih Maood (as) predicted in this pamphlet turned out to be true. Several speeches were made in that conference but the Promised Messiah's paper towered above all and it was the only one that addressed all the five questions asked. In addition only two hours were allocated for his speech. But it went on for about four full hours with the indulgence of the organizers of the conference. Furthermore many newspapers gave rave reviews for this address. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) did not attend the conference in person. His companion Maulvi Abdul Karim of Sialkot read the paper

in front of about six to seven thousand attendees of which many listened while standing because of lack of seats.

This address of Hazrat Masih Maood (as) will remain a landmark in spirituality. Anyone who takes the time to read the book cannot be unimpressed with the wisdom that its pages contain. Anyone who is looking for a basic explanation of Islamic teachings can find it there. Almost half of the book is devoted to answering the first question. Detailed explanations are given about how man moves from the physical state of his being to a spiritual one. Now I will tell you how Hazrat Masih Maood (as) has explained the third question, namely ‘*What is the true purpose of man's existence on earth and how can it be achieved?*’ He says:

“Though different people, on account of their shortsightedness or lack of courage, appoint various types of objectives for their lives and stop short at worldly purposes and desires, yet the purpose that God Almighty has specified in His Holy Word is: **I have created jinn and men so that they should recognize and worship Me.** According to this verse the true purpose of human life is the worship and understanding of God Almighty and devotion to Him. It is obvious that it is not open to man that he should himself lay down the purpose of his life by his own authority inasmuch as man does not arrive in the world of his own will, nor will he depart from this world of his own will. He is a created being and He Who created him and bestowed upon him better and higher faculties than those bestowed upon other animates, has enjoined a purpose for his life. Whether anyone comprehends that purpose or not, without doubt the purpose of man’s creation is the worship and understanding of God Almighty and to lose himself in Him.”

Any created object cannot assign to itself its own purpose. It is the creator of the object that assigns its purpose. The one who designed airplanes for example designed it for a purpose. All the objects that we see around us were built to a purpose and it is the designer that assigns this purpose and not the object itself. In the case of man Allah is the Designer, Allah is the Creator and He has assigned a purpose for man’s existence. Elaborating on this matter Hazrat Masih Maood (as) says:

The real purpose of all the external and internal limbs and faculties that have been bestowed on man is understanding and worship and love of God. That is why, despite a thousand occupations, man does not find his true well-being except in God Almighty. Having acquired great wealth, or achieved high office, or having become a great merchant, or having acquired governing authority, or become a great philosopher, he departs in the end from these worldly involvements with a sense of frustration. His heart rebukes him all the time about his deep concern with the world and his conscience never approves his wiles and deceits and wrongful actions. This

problem can be appreciated in another way. The purpose of the creation of a thing is determined by its highest achievement beyond which its faculties cannot rise. For instance, the highest a bullock is capable of is ploughing, or irrigation, or transportation, and therefore these are the purpose of its life and it cannot rise above them. But when we take stock of man's faculties and powers to discover his highest capacity, we find that he is invested with the faculty of seeking after God so much so that he desires that he should become so devoted to God's love that he should have nothing of his own and that everything should become God's. He shares his natural needs like food and drink and rest with other animates, and in industry some animals are ahead of him; for instance, the bees produce such excellent honey from every type of flower that man has so far not been able to compete with them. It is clear, therefore, that the highest capacity of man is meeting with God Almighty and thus the true purpose of his life is that the window of his heart should open towards God"

Now that the true purpose of man's existence has been established one should know what are the means through which this noble purpose may be achieved. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) gives us at least eight means. We will deal with some today and with the rest *incha* Allah next week. So the first means is:

“Let it be clear that the principal means for achieving this purpose is the correct recognition of and faith in the True God. If this first step is wrongly taken and a person sets up a bird, or an animal, or any of the elements, or a human being as his god, it cannot be expected that his subsequent steps would be taken along the straight path. The True God helps His seekers; but that which is dead cannot help the dead. Allah the Glorious has illustrated this point beautifully in this verse (13:15):

لَهُ دُعَاؤُا الْمُتَّقِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْعَوْنَ مِنْ دُونِهِ لَا يُسْتَجِيبُونَ لَهُمْ بِشَيْءٍ إِلَّا كَبَاطٍ
كُفِّيهِ إِلَى الْمَاءِ لِيَبْلُغَ فَاةً وَمَا هُوَ بِبَارِعِهِ وَمَا دُعَاؤُ الْكُفْرِينَ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ

Worthy of worship alone is the same true God Who is Omnipotent. Those, on whom they call for help beside Him, do not respond to them at all. Their case is like that of one who stretches forth his hands towards water and ask it to enter his mouth. But will it come to do so? Not at all. Thus all the prayers of those who are not cognizant of the True God are futile.”

The second means he explains as follows:

“The second means of achieving the true purpose of life is to become aware of the perfect beauty of God Almighty, for beauty is something which naturally attracts the hearts and generates love. The beauty of God Almighty

is His Unity and His Greatness and His other attributes, as the Holy Qur'an says:

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ لَمْ يَلِدْ ۝ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝
وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ۝

This means that, in His Being and His attributes and His Glory, God is One without associate. All are dependent upon Him and every particle derives its life from Him. He is the Source of grace for everything and receives no grace from anything. He is neither a son nor a father for none is equal to Him. The Holy Qur'an repeatedly draws attention to God's perfection and greatness and points out that such God is the Besought of all hearts and not one who is dead or weak or lacks mercy or power."

The third means is explained in the following words:

"The third means of achieving the purpose of life is to become aware of the benevolence of God Almighty for love is generated by beauty and benevolence. The benevolent attributes of God Almighty are set forth briefly in the *Surah Fatihah*, where it is said:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝ مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ۝

It is obvious that the perfection of benevolence consists in that God Almighty created His servants from nothing and thereafter His Providence was bestowed upon them and He became the support of everything, and all types of His mercy were manifested for His servants. His benevolence is without limit and beyond count as is repeatedly set forth in the Holy Qur'an, as for instance: وَإِنْ تَعَدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا meaning "If you try to number the bounties of Allah, you will certainly not be able to count them." (*Essence of Islam Vol 2 P 464-465*)

Each one amongst us should try to think about Allah's Favours on each one amongst us and allow the Love of Allah to sprout from our hearts. We should recognize these Favours in order to show our gratefulness to Allah. *Incha Allah* we will speak about the other five means in the next sermon. I hope our youngsters will reflect on what we have said today. May Allah help each one amongst us to realize the purpose of our existence *incha Allah*.