

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:

We will continue from where we left in our sermon of last week. We spoke about the background of the book “Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam” and about the purpose of our life and how we should go about achieving it. We said that Hazrat Masih Maood as has taught us that there are eight means to achieve the purpose of our life. Last week we spoke about the first three means and *incha* Allah we will speak about the rest today. Just to recap the first three means he talked about are as follows :(1) **correct recognition of and faith** in the True God (2) to become aware of the **perfect beauty of God Almighty** (3) to become aware of **the benevolence of God Almighty**. We explained last week what Hazrat Masih Maood (as) meant by all these statements. All that I am saying will have some meaning for you personally when you start pondering about them and you relate to them. Hence you should be determined to understand truly why you are here and what are you doing to lead a meaningful life and whether you are really achieving its true objective. In the humdrum of your daily life , while going about your different avocations, most probably like most people you are most concerned about the here and now. But when we read the Holy Quran we understand that Allah wants us to think also of the day when we will return to Him and He will ask us to account for all our deeds. If we have lived well it will be good for us. If we ignored his teachings it will be a terrible moment for us. May Allah give us the opportunity to live in such a way that the day we meet Allah will be the best day for us.

So we will continue with extracts from the book. Hazrat Masih Maood (as) says:

“The *fourth* means of achieving the true purpose of life appointed by God Almighty is supplication, as He has said:”Call on Me, I shall respond to you” (40:61). We are repeatedly urged to supplicate so that we should find God, not through our power but through God’s power.”

This might be a very brief statement but in fact it is pregnant with meaning. One will understand what it means really when we start practicing it that is when we are constantly engaged in making repeated supplications to Allah the Almighty. In a hadith the Holy prophet is reported to have said that “supplication to Allah is the essence of worship”. So we should strive to be engaged in supplications as much as we can. In our heart of heart of heart we should know that we should first resort to Allah and then to other means. If we do not supplicate to Allah He would not care for us. We should

become among those servants who recognize our dependence on Allah and what He is aware of rather than be among the negligent ones who think that they are independent of Him. Anyhow supplication should become a habit with us if we really want to achieve the purpose of our life.

The fifth means that Hazrat Masih Maood (as) talks about is as follows:

“The *fifth* means of achieving the purpose of life appointed by God Almighty, is striving in His cause; that is to say, we should seek God by spending our wealth in His cause and by employing all our faculties in furthering His cause, and by laying down our lives in His cause and by employing our reason in His cause; as He has said:

“Strive in His way with your wealth and your lives and with all your faculties (9:41); and: Whatever We have bestowed upon you of intelligence and knowledge and understanding and art, employ it in Our cause (2:4). We surely guide along Our ways those who strive after Us (29:70).”

The *sixth* means of achieving this purpose has been described as steadfastness, meaning that a seeker should not get tired or disheartened and should not be afraid of being tried, as God has said:

Upon those who affirm: God is our Lord, and turn away from false gods and are steadfast, that is to say, remain firm under trials and calamities, descend angels, reassuring them: Fear not nor grieve, and be filled with happiness; and rejoice that you have inherited the joy that you had been promised. We are your friends in this life and in the hereafter (41:31-32). These verses indicate that steadfastness wins the pleasure of God Almighty. It is true, as has been said, that steadfastness is more than a miracle. The perfection of steadfastness is that when one is encircled by calamities and life and honour and good name are all in peril in the cause of Allah, and no means of comfort are available, so much so, that even visions and dreams and revelation are suspended by God as a trial, and one is left helpless among terrible dangers, at such a time one should not lose heart nor retreat like a coward nor let one's faithfulness be put in doubt in the least. One should not let one's sincerity and perseverance be weakened, one should be pleased with one's disgrace; one should be reconciled to death; one should not wait for a friend to lend one his support in order to keep one firm; nor seek glad tidings from God because of the severity of the trial. One should stand straight and firm despite one's helplessness and weakness and lack of comfort from any direction.

Come what may one should present oneself for sacrifice and should be completely reconciled to divine decrees and one should exhibit no restlessness nor utter any complaint, right till the end of the trial. This is the steadfastness which leads to God. This is that the perfume of which still reaches us from the dust of Messengers and Prophets and Faithful ones and Martyrs.

This is also indicated in the supplication: “*Ehdenas siratam moustaqeem siratal lazina an'amta alayhim*”.

Guide us along the path of steadfastness, the path that attracts Thy bounties and favours and by treading along which one wins Thy pleasure (1:6-7). Another

verse also indicates the same “ *Rabbana afrigh alayna sabraw wa tawaffana Mouslemeen*”(7:127)

Lord, send down on us steadfastness in this time of trial and cause us to die in a state of submission to Thee (7:127). It should be realized that at a time of misfortunes and hardships God Almighty causes a light to descend upon the hearts of those He loves; by being strengthened with this light they face those misfortunes with great serenity; and out of the sweetness of faith they kiss the chains that fetter them. When a godly person is afflicted and the signs of death become manifest, he does not start a contention with his Beneficent Lord that he might be delivered from that condition, inasmuch as to persist in a supplication for security in such a condition means fighting God’s decree and is inconsistent with complete submission. A true lover goes further forward under misfortunes and, holding life as nothing at such a time, and saying goodbye to it, submits completely to the will of God and seeks only His pleasure. Concerning such people God Almighty has said:

“*Wa menan naase man yashri nafsahoub teghaa’a marzaatillah wallaho ra’oufoum bil ebaad*” (2:208)

He whom God loves offers his life in the cause of God in return for God’s pleasure. Such people win the compassion of God (2:208). This is the spirit of steadfastness through which one meets God. Let him who will understand.

Speaking of the seventh means he says:

“The *seventh* means of achieving the purpose of life is to keep company with the righteous, and to observe their perfect example.

One of the needs for the advent of prophets is that man naturally desires a perfect example, and such an example fosters zeal and promotes high resolve. He who does not follow an example becomes slothful and is led astray. This is indicated by Allah, the Glorious, in the verse:” *Kounou ma’as swadeqeen and siratallazina an’amta alayhim*”

Keep company with the righteous (9:119); and in the verse: Guide us along the path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed Thy favours (1:7) that is to say, you should keep company with the righteous and learn the ways of those who have been the recipients of grace before you.”

The last means that Hazrat Masih Maood (as) speaks about is as follows:

“The *eighth* means of achieving the purpose of life are visions and true dreams and revelation. As the path that leads to God Almighty is a difficult one and is studded with misfortunes and hardships and it is possible that a person might go astray while treading along this unfamiliar path and might begin to despair and stop going forward, the mercy of God desires to keep comforting him and encouraging him and augmenting his zeal and eagerness. So it is His way that from time to time He comforts such people with His Word and His revelation and makes it manifest to them that He is with them. Thus they are strengthened and go forward eagerly on this journey. He has said:”*lahomoul boushra fil hayaatid dunya wa fil aakhera*” For them there are glad tidings in this life and in the hereafter. (10:65)

In the end Hazrat Masih Maood (as) tells us that there are some other means which are taught by the Holy Quran but because of lack of time he did not elaborate on them.

Anyhow for our purpose what he has told us is quite sufficient. For each one of us there is the need to think about the Allah that we worship. We should seek answers to the question who is He? Above everything the Holy Quran gives us a clear picture of who is our Lord and hence the need for us to read and reread it and to reflect on what it says to have a better understanding of Allah. Being good Muslims we understand that our Holy Book contains what is true and it is sufficient as guidance for us. Others may seek guidance elsewhere but for us with the light that Allah gave to Hazrat Masih Maood (as) this book is quite sufficient for us. Its wealth of wisdom will never be exhausted. There will always be people guided by Allah to make its teachings relevant for the period in which they are living.

In our quest for Allah we should be sincere if we want to have results. If we are not sincere and just pay lip service to the teachings nothing will be achieved although we might make grandiloquent declarations that much is being achieved. Above everything what we learn from Hazrat Masih Maood (as) is that we should match our words with our deeds. Allah amongst us should renew our commitment to achieve the purpose of our life. We should see what we are doing and what we are not doing. We should aim at reducing the gap that exists between what we should be doing and what we are doing. The quest for Allah is a never ending quest. The sooner we embark upon the better for all of us. So I appeal to you all that you read and reflect over the extracts that I have presented here and try to use them to live your life. May Allah grant you success in this endeavour.

In the end I would like to say some words about what is going on in the world these days. What I mean is some aspects of what is going on these days. Muslim countries are most probably in the worst state that they could be. The distress that ordinary Muslims are going through are indeed very touching and heartrending. Due to a lack of vision and leadership most of these countries are unable to see the end of the tunnel. Most of these leaders are not working in the people's interest but rather in their own. Now some people are thinking that their salvation will come through the establishment of some sort of Khilafat. Thus in the beginning of July this year somebody who butchers Muslims declared himself a caliph on a piece of land in Syria and Iraq. It is as if he opened the door and last week the leader of Boko Haram has declared a caliphate in northern Nigeria. Both these movements have committed many crimes against many innocent Muslims and they have not stopped and they do not have any legitimacy. Allah best knows where will all these developments lead to. As far as we are concerned we should pray that Allah helps the Umma of the Holy Prophet (saw) and they might live in peace. More incha Allah next week.