

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

As sermon today I will not be talking about any specific subject. I will read you some extracts from the writings of Hazrat Masih Maood (as) about several matters. Since in a fortnight most probably we would be entering the month of Ramadhan and we will see Muslims flocking to the mosque for worship I will read you an extract on true worship so that each one should know what to aim for. He says:

“Man claims to worship God, but worship does not consist of a lot of prostrations and bowing and standing, or rotating the beads of a rosary countless times....” [What he means is that it is not the number of bowings and prostrations or the number of times one rotates the beads of a rosary that matters] Worship means to be so drawn to God, out of love for Him, that one’s ego should disappear altogether. [If we think we will easily notice how our ego manifests itself and wants everything for itself. The object of worship is that you have recognized a higher Power than yourself and you recognize Him as the source of all goodness and you do your best to develop a relationship with Him by striving to obey all His commandments that he has made known to us through the Holy Quran.] First, there should be firm faith in the existence of God and a full appreciation of His Beauty and Beneficence. Then there should be such love of God that the heart should ever feel its flame and this condition should be manifest all the time from one’s countenance. God’s greatness should so inspire the heart that the whole world should appear dead in comparison. His being should be the source of all fear. Pain endured for Him should be all joy, His company should be a source of delight, and the heart should find no comfort with anyone other than Him. To reach such a condition is termed ‘worship’; but it is not reached without the special help of God Almighty. That is why He has taught us the prayer: *Iyyaka na’bodo wa iyyaka nasta’een*

That is, we do worship Thee, but how can we do justice to Thy worship until we receive Thy special help? To worship God, having made Him one’s True Beloved, is the essence of sainthood, which is the height of spiritual progress, but this cannot be achieved without His help. The indication of having achieved this is that God’s greatness and love should be established in the heart and the heart should rely completely on Him and love Him alone. And he should prefer Him to everything and make His remembrance the purpose of his life. Such a person

would be ready to carry out with the eagerness of love the most testing commands of God, even if, like Abraham(as), he is commanded to slaughter his own son or to jump into the fire. He will leave no stone unturned in obedience to God and in his eagerness to win His pleasure. This door is very narrow and this drink is very bitter. There are few who enter this door and drink of this bitter cup. It is no great thing to refrain from adultery or killing a person unlawfully; nor is it a great achievement to refrain from bearing false witness. But to prefer God to everything and to welcome every bitterness with true eagerness and out of true love for Him, and to create bitterness for oneself in this path, is a status which cannot be achieved by anyone except the truthful. This is the worship which is prescribed for man. When a person performs this worship, God responds to it with something which is called His bounty; as we are taught in the Holy Qur'an: *"ihdenas siratal moustaqeem siratal lazina an'amta alayhim"* meaning:

"O Allah, guide us along Thy straight path, the path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy favour and have singularized them with Thy special Grace."

The extract ends here. But I may add that there is a very clear verse of the Holy Quran which speaks about those who are favored by Allah. We read in chapter 4, Al Nisa verse 70:

70. And whoso obeys Allāh and this Messenger of His shall be among those on whom Allāh has bestowed His blessings, namely, the Prophets, the Truthful, the Martyrs, and the Righteous. And excellent companions are these.

وَمَنْ يَطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ
الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَ
الصَّادِقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَ
حَسُنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا ۗ

It is these ranks that are promised to those who worship Allah as He should be worshipped and who fear Him as He should be feared. So when we pray with full concentration and being fully conscious that Allah is watching us we are indeed asking Allah to bestow these Favours upon us. Throughout human history we know that there have been thousands and thousands of such souls who have been elevated by Allah. May Allah help each one amongst us to beautify the way we worship and the way we behave day in and day out so that we might be counted among His Special Servants by His Grace. Hazrat Masih Maood(as) further says on this matter:

"It is the way of God that when He accepts service, He necessarily bestows some favour in return. Miracles and signs, which cannot be matched by other people, are also bounties of God Almighty which are bestowed upon His particular

servants.” He then gives four verses in Persian language which are translated as follows:

“O thou who are caught in thy desires during thy whole life, how can thou expect help from Him while thy soul is in such darkness. If you will practice such sincerity as was practiced by Moses(as), it would not be a matter for wonder if a Pharaoh should be drowned.” [*Haqiqat-ul-Wahi, Ruhani Khaza'in*, vol. 22, pp. 54-55]

From his book *Kishti Nuh* we have another interesting extract. He says:

“O ye wealthy ones and o ye rulers! there are very few among you who fear God and follow His ways with righteousness. Most of you spend your life in pursuit of worldly domains and worldly possessions and you do not remember death. Every wealthy one who does not observe the daily prayers and is heedless of God carries the burden of all his servants. Every wealthy one who indulges in liquor also carries the sin of those of his dependents who join him in drink. O ye wise ones! this world is not everlasting. Restrain yourselves and give up all intemperance. Refrain from the use of all intoxicants. Liquor is not the only thing that is destructive for humans, but Opium, Ganja, Hemp, Bhang, Palm-wine and every type of intoxicant which becomes a habit, affects the brain, and ultimately causes ruin. Keep away from all of these. I cannot understand why you should use such things through the evil of which thousands of addicts like you depart from this life every year, and the torment of the hereafter is in addition. Become pious so that you may live long and receive blessings from God. It is an accursed life to indulge excessively in luxury; it is an accursed life to be extremely ill mannered and uncompassionate; and it is an accursed life to be neglectful of sympathy for God’s creatures.

A wealthy one will be called to account about the rights of God and the rights of man as much as, or even more than a beggar. How unfortunate is the person who relies upon this short life and turns wholly away from God and has recourse fearlessly to that which is forbidden by Him as if in his case it were lawful. When angry, he behaves like a mad man and abuses one and wounds another and is ready to kill a third. When he is in the grip of passion, he carries his shameless conduct to the extreme. He will never achieve true happiness even unto his death. Dear ones! you have come into this world for a short time, the greater part of which is past, so do not incur the wrath of your Lord. A human government more powerful than you can destroy you if you offend it; then consider how you can escape God’s displeasure. If you are accounted righteous in the estimation of

God, no one can destroy you and He Himself will safeguard you, and your enemy who wishes to destroy you will not be able to overcome you. Otherwise, you will have no guardian and you will pass a restless life in fear of your enemies or afflicted with other calamities, and your last days will be passed in grief and sorrow. God becomes the refuge of those who identify themselves with Him. So come to God and give up every opposition to Him and be not neglectful in the discharge of your duties to Him, and wrong not His creatures by your tongue or your hand and be ever fearful of the wrath of Heaven. This alone is the way of deliverance. [Kashti-e-Nuh, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 19, pp. 70-72]

In the end I will read an extract on Revelation. He says:

“My dear people! no man can fight God in His designs. Take it for certain that Divine revelation, which was vouchsafed to the noble Prophets of God, is the source of perfect knowledge. God, who is an Ocean of grace, does not intend to seal up His revelation and thus destroy the world. The doors of His revelation and His converse are ever open, but you must search for them in the proper way, only then will they be facilitated for you. The water of life has descended from heaven and has lodged in its proper place. In order to drink this water, you must arrive at the fountain by whatever means possible and put your mouths to it and drink your fill. The whole good fortune of man consists in that he should run in the direction in which he perceives the light and should adopt the way which leads to the Friend Whom he has lost. You observe that light always descends upon the earth from heaven. In the same way, the true light of guidance also descends from heaven. Man's own devices and presumptions cannot procure true understanding for him. Can you find God without His making Himself manifest? Can you see in the dark without heavenly light? If you can, perhaps you might also be able to see in this respect. But our eyes, though full of sight, are dependent upon heavenly light to be able to see; and our ears, though equipped with hearing, are dependent upon the air which blows from God. False is the god who is silent and has to be discovered by our guesses. The Perfect and Living God is He Who has always made Himself manifest, and in this age too He has willed to make Himself manifest. The windows of heaven are about to open. The dawn is at hand. Blessed are those who will arise and seek the True God, Who is overtaken by no calamity and the flash of Whose glory is subject to no accident. In the Holy Qur'an, God Almighty says: *Allaho nours samawwate wal arze*” i.e., God is the light of heaven and earth. He sheds His light everywhere. He is the Sun Who casts His light upon the sun. He is the life of all living creatures in the earth. He is

the True Living God. Blessed is he who accepts Him. [**Islami Usul ki Philosophy, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 10, pp. 443-444**]

All these extracts are quite important for each one amongst us so that we might properly understand what is true worship and strive for it in our daily life. Secondly we should do our best not to indulge in anything that we all know is bad for our health and lastly we should be well aware that Allah continues to talk with His Servants today as He did in the past and no "khilafat" by whatever name will ever be able to stop that. We are grateful to Allah that He has led us to the right path and we pray that He keeps us on it forever.