

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

As I said last week, I will share with our members a part of the writings of Hazrat Masih Maood (as) from the 5th Volume of Baraheen Ahmadiyya where he writes about the different steps in spiritual development. He mainly comments about the first verses of Sura Al Moumenoun (Chapter 23) of the Holy Quran. Last week, we ended with the translation of these verses. Then Hazrat Masih Maood (as) wrote:

“As I have stated above, it is clear that the first stage of man’s spiritual development is the one described in this verse; that is:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ

Meaning that those believers have attained salvation who adopt humility and meekness in their Prayers and in their remembrance of God and who busy themselves in the remembrance of God with tenderness of heart and depth of emotions.

Against this, the first stage of man’s physical development has been described in this verse: ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ

Meaning: Then we made man a sperm and placed that sperm in a safe place. Thus, after the creation of Adam, God Almighty has declared the sperm to be the first physical stage of human development.

Obviously, the sperm is a seed which embodies within it all the faculties, characteristics, inner and outer organs, and the physical features that are plainly revealed at the fifth stage, and are fully and manifestly perfected at the sixth stage. Nonetheless, the stage of the sperm is the most precarious of all the stages, for it is like a seed that has not yet attached itself in any way to the earth. It has still not felt the pull of the [*rihm*—womb] and it is possible that it may be wasted on entering the body of the woman just as a seed is wasted on rocky soil. And it is also possible that the sperm itself may be defective; that is, it may have some imperfection in itself that makes it unfit for growth. It may not have the ability to be attracted by the رحم [*rihm*—womb] and may only be like a corpse in which there is no movement, just like a rotten seed that is sown in the soil; and even though the soil may be excellent, yet by virtue of its own defect it is incapable of growth and development. And it is also possible that due to some other disorders, which we need not elaborate here, the sperm is not able to connect to the رحم [*rihm*—womb] and the رحم [*rihm*—womb] deprives it of its attractive influence; just as a seed is sometimes crushed underfoot, carried away by birds, or destroyed by some other accident.

The same are the characteristics that attend the first stage of a believer's spiritual development—the state of humility, meekness, tenderness, and pathos—that he experiences in worship and in the remembrance of God, which, in other words, means to cultivate in oneself anguish, tenderness, humility, modesty, meekness of spirit, and a yearning and longing, and to turn to God having been overcome by His fear, as has been described in the verse:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ

Meaning that: Those believers have attained their desires who adopt humility and meekness in their Prayers and in every type of their remembrance of Allah, and who occupy themselves in remembering Him with true fervour and supplication, passion, and anguish. This stage of humility, which has been indicated above, is the first stage in the development of the spiritual being. In other words, it is the first seed that is sown in the soil of servitude to God, and it carries in it—in a compact form—all the faculties, attributes, features, beauty, and characteristics of the spirit, which, in the fifth and sixth stages, manifest themselves in the perfect man in an attractive manner. Since this stage, like the stage of the sperm, is the first stage in man's spiritual development, the Quranic verse has placed it in the first stage alongside the stage of the sperm and has described their similarities. This is so that those who reflect deeply on the Holy Quran may understand that the state of humility in Prayer is like a sperm in case of the spiritual being, and like the sperm, it contains all the faculties, attributes, and features of the perfect man. Likewise, just as a sperm remains in a precarious state until it has established a link with the رحم [rihm—womb], so is this initial stage of the spiritual being—the stage of humility—not free from danger until it becomes firmly linked to رحيم [Rahim—the Merciful God].

It should be noted here that when the favour of God Almighty is received without any effort on one's part, this is due to the attribute of رحمانيت [Rahmaniyyat—Graciousness]. For instance, everything that God has created for mankind by way of heaven and earth etc., or even the creation of man himself, all this has come about on account of God's [Rahmaniyyat—Graciousness]. But when one receives favour as a result of one's deeds, worship, effort, and striving, it is the result of [Rahimiyyat—Mercifulness]. This has been the continuous divine practice towards mankind so that when man adopts humility in his Prayer and remembrance of God then he makes himself deserving of [Rahimiyyat—Mercifulness].

So, the only difference in the sperm and in the first stage of the spiritual development—that of humility—is that while the former is dependent upon the pull of the رحم [rihm—womb], the latter requires the pull of رحيم [Rahim—the Merciful]. So, just as it is

possible that the sperm may be wasted before it can establish connection with the رحم [rihm—womb], so is it possible that the first stage of man's spiritual development—that of humility—may be wasted before it is able to establish a connection with the Merciful One.

There are many people who in the initial stage cry, are ecstatic, and rave and rant in their Prayers, and show all manner of frenzy and fervency in their love for God, and manifest various states of being enamoured with God, but since they are unable to establish any connection with the Bountiful One, whose attribute is Mercifulness, and are not drawn towards Him by means of His special manifestations, all their crying, humility, and supplication are baseless and they often falter and fall into a state worse than before. So, this is a wonderful and interesting similarity between the sperm—which is the first stage of the physical development and which comes to nothing unless the pull of the رحم [rihm—womb] comes to its aid, and the state of humility—which is worthless unless the pull of God's mercy comes to its assistance.

It is on this account that you will find thousands who, in some part of their lives, had enjoyed the state of humility in their Prayers and remembrance of God, and they cried and supplicated in ecstasy, but then some such curse took hold of them that turned them suddenly towards selfish ends, and they became totally lost in the world and its desires and passions. This is indeed a fearful scenario whereby their state of humility ends before they have established a link with the Merciful One. Before the pull of the Merciful God effects some action upon them, that state is gone and lost. As such, their spiritual condition, which is at the first stage of spiritual development, is akin to the sperm that is lost before it can establish a connection with the [rihm—womb].

In short, the first stage of the spiritual being—that of humility—and the first stage of the physical being—that of the sperm—are similar in that the first stage of the physical being—that of the sperm—is worthless without the pull of the رحم [rihm—womb], and the first stage of the spiritual being—that of humility—is nothing without the pull of God, the رحيم [Rahim—Merciful].

And just as countless sperms go to waste in this world, being destroyed in that state without having established a connection with the رحم [rihm—womb], so are there countless instances of the states of humility that are wasted because they fail to be connected to رحيم [Rahim—the Merciful God]. There are thousands of ignorant people who, on account of a few days of humility, rapture, and supplication, become satisfied and think that they have attained the status of *wali* or *ghaus* or *qutb* or *abdal*, or have become godly, whereas in fact they are nothing at all; they are still a mere sperm. As yet, they are only acquainted with the name of God. The loving relationship with Allah has

not even touched them. Alas! A large number of people have been destroyed on account of such vain thoughts.

Bear in mind that the first stage of the spiritual being — that of humility — can perish due to a myriad of factors, just as the sperm — which is the first stage of the physical being — can come to naught due to various kinds of mishaps, including a defect in the sperm itself. For instance, if the state of humility has some idolatrous contamination in it, or is mixed with some unlawful innovation or frivolity, such as a person's carnal and unholy desires and passions expressing themselves, or the heart is in the grip of base objectives, or has become overpowered by the frivolous worldly desires; thus, burdened by all these unholy disorders, the state of humility is not deemed worthy of establishing a link with the Merciful God, in the same way as a defective sperm will fail to connect itself to the رحم [*rihm*—womb]. This is why the state of humility of the Hindu yogis and the Christian clergymen does not benefit them in the least. If they take their anguish and supplications to a level where they reduce their bodies to a fleshless skeleton, even then the رحيم [*Rahim*—Merciful One] does not establish a connection with them because their state of humility has an inherent flaw.

The same is the case of the mendicants of Islam steeped in innovation who, shunning the Holy Quran, adopt instead a thousand forms of innovation, so much so that they shamelessly employ hemp or marijuana or alcohol, not to mention other forms of evil in which they indulge as freely as a child partakes of its mother's milk. Since their condition has no affinity or connection with the Merciful God, their condition is extremely repugnant in the eyes of God, therefore, despite all their own type of ecstasy, dance, poetry, and music etc., they remain totally deprived of establishing a relationship with the Merciful God. They are like the sperm which, on account of syphilis or leprosy becomes defective and unfit for the رحم [*rihm*—womb] to establish a link with it.

Thus, the relationship with the رحم [*rihm*—womb] and رحيم [*Rahim*—the Merciful God], or the absence of it, is due to the same cause, the difference has only to do with the disorders being physical or spiritual. Just as a sperm at times is not fit so that the رحم [*rihm*—womb] may establish a connection with it and draw it to itself on account of some inherent disorders, the same is true of the state of humility — which is equivalent to the state of the sperm — which, due to some inherent disorders of its own, such as pride, arrogance and ostentation, and other forms of misguidance or idolatry, becomes unworthy that God, the رحيم [*Rahim*—Merciful]. God should establish a connection with it. In short, all the excellence of the first stage of spirituality—i.e. the state of humility—depends upon establishing a true link with the Merciful God, in the same way as all the

excellence of the sperm depends on its developing an association with the رحم [*rihm*—womb].

Thus, if the state of humility is not really linked with God, the رحيم [*Rahim*—Merciful] and no true relationship with Him can develop, then that state is akin to the impure sperm that can never develop a real connection with the رحم [*rihm*—womb]. (Baraheen Ahmadiyya Vol. 5, p. 265-271)

We will stop here for today. We will continue Incha Allah next week.