

FRIDAY SERMON

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Today we will continue with our reading from Malfuzaat Volume 4 of Hazrat Masih Maood(as). Last week responding to someone who had asked the Promised Messiah(as) to pray for him so that he might get a son, Hazrat Masih Maood(as) started speaking about the need to purify our intention in our wish to get children. He said that we should always aim to leave behind us such children who are committed to the same Islamic values as our own so that these teachings are perpetuated among all succeeding generations. It is not enough just to wish for children to whom we would just leave our wealth. Then he said:

“Bear in mind that one should not do a good deed because the action will bring recompense or reward. For if a good deed is done with this intention, it cannot truly be *to seek the pleasure of Allah (Ibteghaé marzaatillah)*.

In fact, the deed will be for the sake of reward and it is possible that the person may forsake it at some point in time. For example, if a person comes to meet me every day and I give him a rupee each time, he will begin to think that the only reason he visits me is for money. The individual will stop visiting the day he stops receiving that one rupee. Therefore, this is a subtle form of association of partners with God from which one ought to save oneself. One ought to do good purely for the delight and pleasure of God Almighty, and to obey His command, irrespective of whether the action brings reward or not. **It is only when this evil suggestion and idea is removed that faith becomes complete.** It is, of course, true that God Almighty does not disregard a person’s good deeds.

“Surely, Allah suffers not the reward of those who do good to be lost.” (9:120)

However, the person who performs a good deed should not be motivated by reward. For example, if guests come here to visit only because facilities are available, refreshing drinks and well-prepared food is served, they come for these particular things. The fact of the matter is that a host is duty bound to do everything in his power to leave no stone unturned in offering the best hospitality, and to give comfort to a guest—and this is what hosts do—however, if a guests think in this way, this is harmful to them.

So, the purpose is to highlight that the desire for children ought to be rooted in virtue. It should not be so that one leaves behind a successor to continue in sin. God Almighty knows well that for me, the desire for children never arose; although God Almighty gave me

children when I was about fifteen or sixteen years of age. Sultan Ahmad and Fazl Ahmad (**two sons of Hazrat Ahmad(as) from his first marriage**) were born at around this age. However, I never possessed the desire for them to be renowned and well-respected in the eyes of the world or for them to reach high positions. As such, in relation to such progeny that goes on to live a life of sin and transgression, the verdict of Sadi (a Persian poet) seems correct, when he says:

It is better for the ignoble son to die before his father.

Another point to note is that people do often hold a strong desire to have children, and they are blessed with children also. However, it is rarely observed that they strive and struggle to train their children, to make them exemplary, instill in them good character and teach them to become obedient to God Almighty; they do not pray for them either. They do not keep in view the various aspects of training.

My own state is such that not a single Prayer goes by in which I do not pray for my friends, my children and my wife. There are many parents who will teach their children bad habits. In the very beginning, when they begin to learn bad deeds, they do not admonish them, and as a result, day by day, they become even more bold and fearless. There is a story that a young man was sentenced to death by hanging for his crimes. Just before his death, he expressed a desire to see his mother. When his mother arrived, he approached his mother and said: ‘I would like to kiss your tongue.’ When she stuck out her tongue, he bit it off. When he was questioned about this, he said: ‘**This is the mother who has led me to my hanging; for if she had forbidden me from committing vice, today I would not be in this state.**’

In summary, although many people desire to have children, this is not so that they will become servants of the Faith, but only to produce a worldly heir. Then, when a child is born, due concern is not shown to train them, nor are they corrected in their beliefs or set right in terms of their moral state. Remember, such a one cannot be sound in his faith who does not understand the responsibility he owes to their nearest relations. When someone is failing in this respect, how can it be expected that he will do other virtues? Allah Almighty has expressed in the Holy Quran the manner in which one ought to desire children, as follows:

رَبَّنَا بَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّتِنَا فُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِمَنْتَقِينَ إِمَامًا

*Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight
of our eyes, and make us a model for the righteous. (25:75)*

In other words, may God Almighty grant us the delight of our eyes in our wives and children. This can only be possible if they do not lead a life of sin and transgression, but rather, live their lives as servants of the Gracious God and give precedence to God over all else. Allah the Exalted states clearly in this verse:

وَاجْعَلْنَا لِمَنْتَقِينَ إِمَامًا

And make us a model for the righteous.

If one's progeny is pious and righteous, one will obviously be their leader. In this verse, **therefore, one also prays for oneself to become righteous.**"

May Allah help each one among us to clearly understand what Hazrat Masih Maood(as) has said in this extract and may Allah make us and our progeny righteous by His Grace. Ameen.

Now we will read what Hazrat Masih Maood(as) said about some other topics.

Speaking about tranquility of the heart Hazrat Masih Maood(as) said:

"Allah the Exalted states:

أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

Aye! it is in the remembrance of Allah that hearts can find comfort.

The obvious meaning of these words is that the hearts find comfort in the remembrance of Allah Almighty. However, the deeper reality and philosophy in this is that when a person remembers Allah Almighty with **true sincerity and unswerving loyalty, and constantly believes that he is in the presence of God** this impress upon the heart a fear of God's grandeur. That very same fear saves a person from committing all that is disliked in the sight of God and prohibited by Him. As a result, one advances in piety and righteousness, until the angels of Allah Almighty descend upon such people and give him glad tidings, and the door of revelation is opened to him. At this time, one begins to see Allah the Exalted, as it were, and observes His most hidden and intricate Powers. This is the state when no grief or pain overshadows one's heart and one's disposition feels an enduring sense of joy and delight. This is why it is also stated in the Holy Quran at another instance:

وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

No fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve. (2:63)

If ever such a one does experience any pain or grief, Allah the Exalted gives rise to such external means through His revelation that dispel these feelings or such a person is given miraculous patience."

Speaking about **the station of the Holy prophet** (saw), commenting on a famous verse of the Holy Quran "*Dana fata dalla*" (then he drew nearer to God then he came down to mankind) expresses the greatness of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. What this means is that the Holy Prophet(saw) first approached closer to Allah, then he came down to mankind. The excellence of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is one of the highest degree. The like of it cannot be found anywhere else in the world. Two stations of this excellence are referred to in this instance. Firstly, there is the Prophet's ascent and secondly, his descent.

First, the Messenger of Allah ascended towards Allah the Exalted, which means that he became so absorbed in the love of God Almighty, and in his sincerity and devotion towards Him that He was conferred so great a rank that the holy being of God Himself came down to

meet Him, as it were. The word *dunuw* (to draw near) is more intense than *aqrab* (which means to come close) and this is why the former has been used in this context. When the Holy Prophet (saw) had partaken of the bounties and blessings of Allah Almighty he descended towards humanity to bless them with his mercy—the same mercy that Allah Almighty alludes to in the following words:

We have sent thee not but as a mercy for all peoples.

This is the underlying secret in the name of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, that was *Qasim* (the one who distributes). For the Holy Prophet(saw) would receive from God whatever he was given and then he would share it with God's creation. Therefore, in order to share with humanity, the Holy Prophet (saw) descended, as it were. So, these words *نَزَّلْنَاكَ ذَٰلِكُمْ* speak of the Prophet's ascent towards God and descent towards humanity. This is a proof of the high rank of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him."

In another extract Hazrat Masih Maood(as) said:

"There are two kinds of people in the time of the Prophets, peace be upon them. Firstly, there are those who take metaphors in the literal sense and seek to turn literal expressions into metaphors. This group of people remains deprived of the ability to recognise the Prophets. **However, there is another group**, who by the grace of Allah Almighty and through His succour are able to reach the deeper reality. These people understand metaphors as metaphors and literal expressions for what they are.

When the Messiah (Hazrat Isa(as)) appeared, the Jews stated, on the basis of what they read in the book of Malachi (one of the books of the ancient testament), that the sign for the advent of the Messiah was that Elijah (Hazrat Ilyas(as)) must descend from heaven. When they posed this question to the Messiah, peace be upon him, although he accepted that the prophecy was true, his own verdict on the matter was that John (Hazrat Yahya(as)) was the awaited Elijah. On hearing this statement, the Jews went to John(as)—who was completely unaware of the discussion that had taken place—and asked him whether he was Elijah(as), but naturally he rejected this notion. As a result, the Jews grew even more in their opposition. They remained ignorant of the true, deeper reality and put all their emphasis on the apparent word and as a result, they rejected a true Prophet of God Almighty. In fact, not only did they reject him, they strived to disgrace him in every way possible and ultimately in the estimation of God Almighty **they became an accursed people** who incurred His wrath." (P42)

In brief the Jews misunderstood the prophecy because they were looking for a literal fulfillment of the words. Today's Muslims also are doing the same thing as the Jews despite the fact that they have been taught in Sura Fatiha to pray so that they might not become like Jews and they are still awaiting the Messiah to change their lot. What a pity. Incha Allah we will continue next time.