

FRIDAY SERMON

5th December 2025

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Today we will continue reading the fourth part of the conversation that Hazrat Masih Maood(as) had with the visitor Mr. Dickson in Qadian. Hazrat Masih Maood(as) said:

“Therefore, if someone forsakes the tales and stories, and abandons the fanciful and imaginary method which suggests that suicide can deliver people from sin, and if they remain here with honesty and sincerity, he will behold God. **It is seeing God which is the very thing that brings about a death to sin.** Otherwise, to rejoice over the fact that one is free from a specific sin, or some other vice cannot make one worthy of true salvation. This would be no different than one person who dies by consuming strychnine, while another perishes by taking arsenic, or because of almond poisoning. I have no reason to engage at this moment in a lengthy discussion regarding the manner of salvation proposed by the Christians or in relation to the practice of any other religion, for experience and observation themselves testify to the matter. I wish only to put forth the method of which God has given me understanding and the manner that He has disclosed to me.

Therefore, the manner in which to save oneself from sin, which has been disclosed to me, **is the same as what the holy community of the Prophets**, presented to the world in their respective ages. One can only fully triumph over their human passions, and Satan, along with his progeny, can only be vanquished when **the illuminating certainty descends on a person’s heart that God exists**. One must know that sin is diametrically opposed to His holy attributes, and that His wrath descends upon the sinners, and that the pious are delivered from every affliction through His grace and mercy. This divine insight and certainty **cannot be developed until one remains in the company of those people who possess an extremely close relationship with God Almighty; these are people who receive from God and convey to the people**. So, this is the purpose with which I have come to the world, and this is what I have explained to you. Now you ought to reflect over this and if you have any questions, you are most welcome to ask.”

Mr Dickson said: “Does God punish in this world or in the next world?”

Hazrat Masih Maood(as) said:

“I have understood your question. From what God Almighty has taught us through the Prophets—and authentic events have testified to the same—it is clearly evident that God has **established the law of reward and punishment in such a way that it begins in this very world**. A person who is guilty of insolence and mischief, whether he perceives his own conduct or not, receives their punishment and recompense in this very world. This serves as a warning so that an insolent person may bring about a meaningful transformation in his own state through repentance and by turning towards God. This also enables a person to realise his own negligence towards God Almighty in strengthening his bond of servitude with Him. At such a time, one either benefits from this warning and seeks the cure for one’s weakness with the support of Allah Almighty, or becomes even more brazen due to one’s wretched nature, and grows in transgression and mischief until one reaches hell. The punishments that are given in this world as warnings are like the ones given at school. When minor punishments are given to children at school if they are negligent or careless, this is not because the teacher desires to deprive them from learning. In fact, the purpose is to draw their attention to their greater purpose, so that they become more vigilant and careful in future. Similarly, when God gives certain punishments for vice and mischief, His purpose is so that the foolish person who is wronging his own soul may learn of the consequences of his own evil, fear Allah the Exalted for His greatness and power, and then turn to Him. I have mentioned this to my community countless times, and now I tell you as well, that when a person performs an action, by way of consequence, **there is a reaction from God Almighty**.

For example, if we were to consume a sufficient amount of poison, the necessary consequence would be that we would die. In this example, consuming the poison is our own action, and in turn the action reciprocated by God is that He causes one to die as a result. Now, if we were to close the windows in our room, this would be our action; the action of Allah the Exalted by way of consequence would be that the room would become dark. It is in this manner that the law of man’s actions and the reciprocal actions of God by way of consequence is established in the world. Just as we observe on a daily basis this system in the apparent sense with examples to be found in the physical world, so too it relates to the spiritual realm as well. It is this very principle which is necessary to understand the law of punishment. In other words, each and every action of ours, whether good or bad, carries an effect that is manifested after we perform that action.

Now, the chastisement or pleasure that one receives as a consequence of sin or as a reward for good deeds, is a phenomenon we can easily understand. I can say with complete insight and confidence that all the other religions are incapable and unable to provide an exposition of this philosophy. Every individual who believes in God professes that man has been created to show devotion to God.

Hence, a person’s greatest delight and his ultimate pleasure can only be realized if he becomes wholly devoted to God. Until a person reinforces and gives practical expression to the relationship that ought to exist—or as one should say, which naturally exists—between

divinity (*uluhiyyat*) and man's servitude to God (*ubudiyyat*), he cannot attain true happiness. This is the objective in the advent of Prophets, peace be upon them. The higher purpose with which they come is to return this lost wealth to the people—the wealth that is the mutual relationship between man's servitude and God's divinity. However, when a person distances himself from God, he detaches himself from this chain of love, which ought to exist between God and His servant. This is an action of man, and in turn, the action with which God reciprocates is that He too distances Himself from that individual. It is on account of this very distance that the human heart is overcome by darkness. Just as a room is filled with darkness when its windows are closed to the sun, in the same manner, a person who turns away from God will find that his inner self begins to fill with darkness. The more distant one becomes, the more darkness spreads, until the heart is blackened completely. This very darkness is what we call hell, because this is what gives rise to punishment.

Now, if one strives to save oneself from this chastisement by refraining from the factors which resulted in this distance from God Almighty, He turns to a person with His grace. When the shutters are opened, just as the absent light returns to dispel the darkness, similarly, the light of good fortune which had vanished is once again given to the person who turns to God, and one begins to benefit from it.

This is the philosophy of repentance as well, a parallel of which we clearly observe in the law of nature. It should also be kept in mind that when punishments descend upon various nations in the time of the Prophets, as in the case of the people of Lot as, or in the manner that the Jews were destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar or Titus of Rome, it is not because of mere disagreement. **Instead, these chastisements and miseries are due to the mischief, evil and pain that they inflict upon the Prophets.**

Ultimately, their evil is overturned upon their own selves, and leads to their ruin and destruction. At the heart of governance and rule, a fundamental principle is that anyone who disturbs the public peace, be it thieves, robbers, rebels, or criminals guilty of other wrongdoings, is punished so that peace is maintained in future and others take a lesson. Similarly, God Almighty has established the law that He punishes the wicked and disobedient who do not care about His limits and commandments so that these people do not cross all bounds. Those who seek to transgress the bounds are warned by God immediately. It ought to be remembered also that such punishments and warnings are a blessing for the one who receives them and others as well who observe and take a lesson. For if punishments were not given, peace would be lost and ultimately the outcome would be most unfortunate. If one reflects over the law of nature, it becomes manifestly clear that this phenomenon is a part of human nature. It is on the basis of this very natural human characteristic that the Quran states:

وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِصَاصِ حَيَوةٌ يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

And there is life for you in the law of retaliation,

O men of understanding, that you may enjoy security.(2:180)

This means that retribution is necessary to preserve the fabric of society. If actions had no outcomes, then what would be their use and what would be their purpose?

Therefore, the punishments that are given in this world are not actually the real thing; in fact, they are a reflection of the real punishment to come, and the purpose is to warn the people.

The **objectives of the next world are different and they supersede everything else**. In the hereafter, people will see consequences reflected before them as mentioned in the following:

وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ

And whoso does an atom's weight of evil will also see it.(99:9)

A person will have to bear the punishment for his most hidden sins and designs.

There is a major difference between the punishments of the hereafter and those of this world. The punishments of this world are to establish peace and serve as a lesson for others, whereas punishments of the next world are the final and ultimate result of man's actions. In the hereafter, a person must be punished because they have consumed a poison, and it is not possible for one to be saved from the effects of that poison without an antidote. The punishment one receives in the hereafter is underpinned by a deeper philosophy, which no other religion except for Islam has been able to expound. Allah the Exalted states in the Holy Quran:

وَمَنْ كَانَ فِيْ بُدْءِ اَعْمٰى فَهُوَ فِيْ الْاٰخِرَةِ اَعْمٰى وَاَضَلُّ سَبِيْلًا

But whoso is blind in this world will be blind in the

Hereafter. And even more astray from the way. (17:73)

This means that whoso is blind in this world will be blind in the next world also; in fact, even more frail than the blind. This clearly demonstrates that a person takes along with them from this very world the eyes with which to behold God and the senses with which to perceive Him. An individual who does not develop these senses in this world will not have them in the next world either. This is a delicate secret that ordinary people cannot understand.....”(P93)

We will stop here for today. Incha Allah we will continue next time. May Allah help each one among us to reflect upon these words and do our best to develop and deepen our relationship with Allah. Allah is the only One who can give us whatever good thing we may wish for in this world and in the next. May He help us to realize this. Ameen!