

Goal of Life

Session Two

Questions

- 1) What is defined as happiness?
- 2) What are the goals of the Prophets according to the Quran?
- 3) What is the complete monotheistic perspective of life according to Islam?

Happiness

- 1) Difference between short term happiness and long term.
- 2) Happiness comes from inside, not outside.
- 3) Happiness for believers comes from:
 - ◆ Closeness to God
 - ◆ Company of other believers
 - ◆ Achieving spiritual goals

Knowledge

Acquire knowledge
for acquiring it is a virtuous deed . . .

Through knowledge
Allah is obeyed and worshipped

and through knowledge

Allah is known
and understood as only One . . .

Holy Prophet (s)

Perfection

Every human being has the potential to achieve perfection.

Human beings have two types of potential:

- a) General potential as a representative of Allah on earth.
- b) Unique potential of a particular role to play in life.



Discovering the true Purpose of life

Consider a hammer. It's designed to hit nails. That's what it was created to do. Now imagine that the hammer never gets used. It just sits in the toolbox. The hammer doesn't care.

But now imagine that same hammer with a soul, a self-consciousness. Days and days go by with him remaining in the toolbox. He feels funny inside, but he's not sure exactly why. Something is missing, but he doesn't know what it is.

Then one day someone pulls him out of the toolbox and uses him to break some branches for the fireplace. The hammer is exhilarated. Being held, being wielded, hitting the branches -- the hammer loves it. At the end of the day, though, he is still unfulfilled. Hitting the branches was fun, but it wasn't enough. Something is still missing.

In the days that follow, he's used often. He reshapes a hubcap, blasts through some sheet rock, knocks a table leg back into place. Still, he's left unfulfilled. So he longs for more action. He wants to be used as much as possible to knock things around, to break things, to blast things, to dent things. He figures that he just hasn't had enough of these events to satisfy him. More of the same, he believes, is the solution to his lack of fulfillment.

Then one day someone uses him on a nail. Suddenly, the lights come on in his hammer soul. He now understands what he was truly designed for. He was meant to hit nails. All the other things he hit pale in comparison. Now he knows what his hammer soul was searching for all along.

We are created in God's image for relationship with him. Being in that relationship is the only thing that will ultimately satisfy our souls. Until we come to know God, we've had many wonderful experiences, but we haven't hit a nail. We've been used for some noble purposes, but not the one we were ultimately designed for, not the one through which we will find the most fulfillment. Augustine summarized it this way: "You [God] have made us for yourself and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee."

<http://www.everystudent.com/wires/greatest.html>

From Hadith al-Qudsi

خَلَقْتُ الْأَشْيَاءَ لِأَجْلِكَ

وَ خَلَقْتُكَ لِأَجْلِي

I have created everything for you

And you I have created for myself

عبویة - Servitude

الْعُبُودِيَّةُ جَوْهَرَةٌ كُنْهُهَا الرِّبُوبِيَّةُ

Servitude is a jewel

Its essence is Lordship

Imam as-Sadiq (a)

Freedom through servitude

Almighty Allah did not create His creatures
except that they may know Him
And when they know Him
they worship Him
And when they worship Him
they are freed from the worship of anything else.

Imam Husayn (a)

True Monotheism

1) The Oneness of Allah in His Lordship

Belief that Allah is the Creator and controls all things.

2) Devotion of All Worship to Allah Alone

None is worthy of worship except Allah

3) The Oneness of Allah in His Names and

Attributes. His attributes are not separate from Him, not acquired externally.

Understanding the above leads to monotheism in the goal of life.

Points to Remember

- 1) The true goal of life is only God. All other goals are either a means of achieving it, or a result of it.
- 2) Human beings can only attain true perfection when they recognize their potential.
- 3) True monotheism is more than just verbal affirmation.