

Editor's Note

These five lectures revolve around God, as the ultimate Goal of Life. The first lecture is introductory in content and the last one serves the purpose of summary and conclusion. The Introduction by the first publisher has been retained to emphasize the usefulness of these lectures. It poses a crucial question: “Are all the pains and sufferings, which have made life so bitter for mankind today, not due to the lack of human recognition of the goal of life?”

Lecture one deals with the above question in the context of the prophetic missions. It points out, Creation has a goal which is one of achieving perfection – on the part of the created, as envisaged by the Creator. Prophetic missions are acknowledged as enhancing this process. In the light of the divine revelations, individuals are called upon to realize their potential—and achieve the goal of their respective life, which, in its perfectibility before eventual return to the Creator, is identical with that of all creations .

Lecture two points out that a school of philosophical thought needs spiritual ideals, too, so that both individuals and their societies have objectives to strive for. It emphasizes their inborn spiritual or conscientious responsibility to the Creator. (“If there were no God, everything would be permissible.”). Its accomplishment is visualized on the basis of mutuality of human concern as part of the oneness of mankind.

Lecture three explains that faith is crucial to any school of thought or social ideology, in that it promotes love, affection and similar other virtues among people. In this context, it elaborates on the implications of monotheism in Islam, specially in lending a universal perspective that extends beyond dialectical materialism and humanism.

Lecture four examines Islamic Faith as a motive force for attaining human perfection. Having faith because it carries with it some beneficial effects is not considered a blessing in itself, since it requires to be constantly perfected. In fact, deriving benefits is not, or ought not to be, the aim.

In the words of Ibn Sina it is like “ working for a wage so that, without that wage, there would be no willingness to work”. The relevant Islamic logic concerning prayers is well summed up by Hadrat Ali (a) when he said: “O' God. I do not worship you for fear of your Fire, nor for cupidity in desiring heaven; I

worship you because you are worthy of it”.

Lecture five evaluates various schools of thought concerning human perfection, including the views of Socrates, Plato, Gnostics and intellect- oriented divine philosophers. It concludes that God is not comparable to a father or anyone or anything else of the paternal kind. He is what He is and other things, too, are attributable to Him. As Sa'di's Boostan puts it: “The way of intellect is a maze; but, for the wise, there is nothing but God .” Knowledge, wisdom, sense of justice, truth, beauty, liberty and loving others are all inculcated and enhanced for His sake even as His blessings. These deserve grateful acknowledgment not merely in formal worship, but through constant awareness and rectitude of action and behavior.

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Mehr, 1361 A.H (Solar)

October, 1982

Source URL: <https://www.al-islam.org/goal-life-ayatullah-murtadha-mutahhari/editor-s-note>