

5 SOME BROTHERLY ADVICE

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

Praise be to Allah. There is no god other than the One who guides His servant in the right path; the Merciful; the Compassionate. He sent us a Messenger who is a sign and a source of mercy to all the worlds; in whom is redemption and guidance; and who is the Savior of all humankind.

I witness that everyone who believes in Him will have eternal life in Paradise. Woe to him who does not believe; wretched is he; his is fire and a horrible end.

IN THIS LESSON YOU WILL STUDY THE FOLLOWING:

- The Sufferings of the Messenger
- The Resurrection of the Messenger
 - How could sinless Isa die for the sins of humankind?
- The Ascension of the Messenger
- Allah's Gift of Eternal Life
 - How is it possible to receive Allah's gift?
- My Brotherly Advice

THE SUFFERINGS OF THE MESSENGER

As for what follows, what happened to Isa the Honorable Messenger when He went to Jerusalem (al Quds)? The Jews arrested Him and put Him on trial. Then they led Him to the Roman governor. The Romans were also unfair to Him. They despised Him; they beat Him; they cursed

Him, then they crucified Him. Even while He hung on the cross, they mocked Him. But He asked Allah to forgive them. This unlimited love, my friend, that does not seek vengeance, has to be divine. Al-Masih, may His peace be upon us, bore the judgment of people's sins and offered himself as a sacrifice on behalf of all humankind, even though He himself was sinless. This is the greatest sacrifice in history. As He was suffering in torment, He cried: *My God, my God (Elahi, Elahi), why did you abandon me?*

Moments later He died. They took His body and buried Him. Everyone thought that was the end of Isa. That took place on Friday.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE MESSENGER

Sunday morning, Isa Al-Masih rose from the grave, victorious over death and Satan. Allah, glorious, accepted that sacrifice, and proved it by raising Isa from the dead. Thus, Allah showed that the death of Al-Masih was the needed redemption to grant people pardon. Al-Masih's crucifixion satisfied the demands of Allah's justice—the punishment of sinful man. And satisfied Allah's mercy by the sacrifice offered on behalf of wretched humans. So by the death and resurrection of Al-Masih, the justice and mercy of Allah were reconciled. On this basis, people can be delivered on the Day of Judgment and obtain assurance of eternal life, starting even now.

Please notice, my friend, that this is not a commercial operation, nor is it a bribe. Allah loves us and has offered us His help by sending our Master Isa to redeem us.

Here we are faced with a question: **How could sinless Isa die for the sins of humankind, and what law accepts that?** The answer is that Al-Masih was not a mere man who was innocent and bore the punishment for sinful humankind. Otherwise, His death would have been unjust and unacceptable. Al-Masih was not an ordinary man. He was unique. He was matchless. He is more than a man—He is the Word of Allah. He came to the world and accepted willingly to suffer and die to redeem us.

THE ASCENSION OF THE MESSENGER

The story did not end with Isa Al-Masih's resurrection from the dead. He ascended alive to heaven, and His followers saw Him ascending until He disappeared in the clouds. Today His grave in Jerusalem is empty, and He is alive in heaven.

ALLAH'S GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE

My friend, through Al-Masih's sacrifice for you, Allah offers you forgiveness for your sins. You can know Allah and enjoy a beautiful relationship with the Glorious Creator and obtain eternal life in Paradise. But how is that possible? **How is it possible to receive Allah's gift of eternal life?** There are two steps to follow.

One: Believe. Allah's Glorious Book says:

Eternal life with our Lord (Maulana) Isa Al-Masih is a free gift from Allah . . . so whoever believes on Him will escape the punishment of the Day of Judgment. And whoever does not believe on Him, the punishment of the Day of Judgment will fall upon him, even from now.

My friend, Allah is offering you a gift. It is eternal life. It is your duty to accept what Allah offers you. If you accept His gift to you, you honor Allah Almighty. So believe in Him and accept His gift so that you may be set free from the debt of sins you are carrying.

Perhaps you say: I do believe in Allah. I am not an atheist (kafir). Good, my friend. I agree with you. However, the faith we are talking about here means that you put your trust in Al-Masih's redemption for you. That is, you believe that He died and rose from the dead for you personally. Therefore, Allah Almighty has said in His Glorious Book:

If you confess with your mouth that Isa is the Lord (Moula) and believe in your heart that Allah raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

To be saved means to be delivered from the burden of your sins, from the guilt of your tormented conscience. It means to be saved from the condemnation of the Last Day and from eternal hell.

It is because of Allah's goodness and grace towards us that He does not require of us things which are impossible. No, no. He only demands that we have true faith in our hearts; that's all. And this is the faith that stirs up in humans a superior quality of life—pure and decent. Life that has a real goal and purpose.

I was amazed when I read about our master Abraham because he lived in a place where people did not believe in Allah. Allah Almighty called him and commanded him to leave his city and tribe and set out on a journey. He promised He would bless him and give him children and land. Abraham believed Allah's words, obeyed, and set out as Allah directed.

Allah cares for people. And He stretches out His hand to help them. However, it is important that they respond by believing Allah's words of truth and obeying Him as Abraham did.

Two: Repent. What is repentance? It means that I change the direction of my life. It is like the driver of a car who suddenly discovers that he has taken the wrong road. He turns his car around and heads in the right direction. Repentance involves sorrow for having committed sin and determination never to return to it. You, my friend, must repent. You must realize that you are going the wrong way and change your direction. You need Isa to change your heart and to purify your mind.

Dear friend, every religion has its good points. But we are not talking about religion, nor are we comparing religions. This is the problem of people's guilt and how to have freedom from it. The biggest difficulty facing people today is the problem of guilt. We have discovered together that the only solution is to put our trust in Isa's redemption.

MY BROTHERLY ADVICE

Because Isa Al-Masih took your place on the cross, your life can be radically and totally transformed for the better. Al-Masih can change your feelings, your attitudes, and your heart. He can cleanse you from your sin and disobedience. He alone can set you free from the problem of guilt and the fear of hell.

Do you remember what we said in lesson three about our master Noah—how Allah ordered him to make a ship as a means of rescue for those who would repent? This shows us that deliverance is possible for

whoever chooses it. Do you not see with me, my friend, that Allah does not force anybody, but that He gives freedom to all people to choose the right path if they want to? He did not compel anybody to take refuge in the ship. Noah and his family were the only ones who chose to enter, and they were delivered from the flood. All the rest of the people perished.

My advice to you then is this: Put your trust in Isa and surrender to Him. Let Allah be your support (wakil). If you do that, your heart will be filled with hope. Your life will be filled with peace and light. You will not need to fear death or to expect torment on the Day of Judgment.

I read the story of a rich prince who sent one of his servants into town to make the following announcement: "All those who come to the palace next Saturday between 8 o'clock and 10 o'clock in the morning will have their debts cancelled. Each one must bring his papers to prove what his debt is." Everybody thought that sounded strange, and they started talking about it among themselves. Some said: "That's not possible. The prince is mean, and he is playing a trick on us." Others said: "How can he cancel all our debts? We don't believe it!" When Saturday came, the townspeople gathered in front of the palace and discussed the subject at length. Eight o'clock came, and no one entered the palace. More time passed, and at half past nine, an old man and his wife came with all their papers to prove the amount of their debt. They went right into the palace without stopping to talk with the people outside. Then the prince told his secretary to cancel their debt. The old man thanked the prince for his mercy and generosity and said to him: "I'm going to go outside now to tell the others that what you said is true, my lord." But the prince told him: "No! Don't go out now. Go out at 10 o'clock, when it will be too late. You believed in me and in what I said. You believed that my words were true and that my promise was sincere. They must believe my words and my promise in the same way." At 10 o'clock, the prince went out of the palace, followed by the old man who cried out: "May Allah bless you, my lord. Now I can die without leaving any debts behind me." The people watching ran behind the prince, crying out for him to cancel their debts too. But the prince refused, saying: "You refused to believe what I said, and now it is too late."

This is a simple story, but it shows us how Al-Masih forgives us because He is merciful and loving. He is the Redeemer who sacrificed himself for us on the cross. If you believe in Isa, He will forgive your disobedience and the sins you have committed. He will forgive your bad thoughts and desires, and the good that you failed to do. However, if you

refuse to believe in Isa, you will be the only one to blame.

Many people like you, Muslims and non-Muslims, who had lost all hope in life, have realized that Allah loves them. They have responded to His call and entered into His great peace. Isa is alive. He has conquered death and Satan. He gives victory to everyone who accepts Him and surrenders to Him.

So, my dear friend, I counsel you to choose the right path. Allah has made it clear that those who believe in Isa have the reward— eternity in Paradise. Those who do not believe in Isa will be damned forever. Therefore, I would like you to think about this, my friend. It is a very serious matter. You are choosing eternal happiness or eternal misery. If you choose the right path, I would ask you to say this supplication (du' a) to Allah Almighty.

SUPPLICATION

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. O Allah, I witness that I believe in You and that You sent our Lord (Maulana) Isa, may His peace be upon us. He died to redeem me from my sin and rebellion, and rose victorious over death. He is alive in heaven now. I witness that I have surrendered to Him. O Allah, I repent and turn to You. Forgive my sin and accept my repentance. Grant me this new, beautiful relationship with You, O Master of the worlds. I thank You because You answer. In the name of Isa Al-Masih, Amen.

If you are truly sincere, Allah will answer your supplication.

In the keeping of Allah.

Your friend,

Sheikh Abdullah

To HELP YOU LEARN

Please complete the following statements in Part A. Then answer the questions in Part B. You may write in your book or on separate paper. After you complete this assignment, you may compare your answers with the correct answers provided in the section called *To Help You Learn – Answers* toward the back of this book.

Completing this part of lesson five called *To Help You Learn* will help you remember the important truths of this lesson.

A. COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING

1. Al-Masih died on the cross on this day _____ and rose again on this day _____.
2. I must repent. To repent means that I realize I am on the wrong road and decide to _____
3. If I put my trust in Isa and surrender to Him, my life will be transformed for the _____
4. Since Allah has given me free choice, if I refuse to believe in Al-Masih, the only one responsible for this will be _____
5. Go back to the lesson, study this statement, memorize it, and then write it here from memory: “Eternal life with our Lord Isa Al-Masih is _____.”

B. ANSWER BRIEFLY

1. “If you confess with your mouth that Isa is your Lord and believe in your heart that Allah raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” What does “saved” mean?

2. Allah was satisfied with Al-Masih's sacrifice for humankind. What is the proof that Allah accepted that sacrifice?

3. What is the free gift that Allah gives you when you believe in Isa? _____

4. What has happened to the many people, Muslims and non-Muslims, who had lost hope in life but have responded to Isa's call?

5. Mention four things which show that Isa was unique and matchless. You may find part of the answer in lesson four.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____