

THE MESSAGE OF NABI ISA

Long ago, before you could pick up a telephone, send an email, fax a letter, or even open your iPad or Smart Phone, the people living then also needed to send messages. They wanted to share news, express their love, warn of dangers, or whatever was on their hearts and minds. Their messages were sent by letter that was sent by horse drawn coaches or sail ships. It could take many days, weeks or even months, to reach their destination. And here you get a message through Facebook that arrived on your computer or Smartphone the minute I sent it. Amazing, Isn't it?

But messages were not only sent from person to person. God also sent messages to us. He did it by 'speaking' to His chosen messengers who were, in turn, to share it with mankind. Would one not expect the Designer and Creator of the universe to reveal who He is, and to send instructions to His people, expressing how to live in harmony with their Maker and each other?

A man, who received a message from God that he was told to share with us, is called a 'prophet'. Already in the *Taurat* God explained to Moses who or what a prophet is:

"I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them [the people] everything I command him. I myself will call to account anyone who does not listen to my words that the prophet [Nabi] speaks in my name."
(Deut. 18:18-19)

Surah Myriyam (verse 30) and many other passages speak of the same Nabi:

نَبِيًّا وَجَعَلْنِي بِالْكِتَابِ آتَانِي وَلَوْلَا دُبْعُ يَنْ لَأَقَّ

"He [Jesus] said, listen! I am Allah's servant; Allah has given me the book and made me a prophet".

Jews, Christians, and Muslims, agree more or less on who these messengers were. They all believe that Noah, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Job, and David were among them. The Jews would deny Jesus the title 'prophet', while Muslims call Jesus 'Nabi Isa'. Interesting is the fact that, while he also is a 'messenger', the message He brought for us, is not recorded in the Qur'an. Because it came from God, it is most important for us to know it! So, what is the message, and where can we find it? You can only find it in the Bible. So let us have a look at some of it.

(Words printed in blue are those given to the old prophets)

(Words printed in red are the words of Nabi Isa, who is Jesus)

NABI ISA WAS A GREAT TEACHER

First of all He instructs us on how to live the way that honours God. Then He shows us the way God means us to live. Thirdly He warns us about the consequences of a life that is out of touch with Him.

He continues to tell us what sin *really* is, what it does in us, but also how we can find forgiveness and peace with God after we have sinned. The Gospel tells us what He has done, to help us live with a pure heart.

These may be lofty ideas, yet he speaks with us in a way all of us can understand. Just read for yourself what he says, and *then* decide what you are going to do about it.

JESUS INSTRUCTS US ...

...ABOUT GOD

“God, created the world.” (Mar 13:19)

“God is spirit.” (Joh 4:24)

“The Lord our God, the Lord is one.” (Mar 12:29)

"All things are possible with God." (Mar 10:27)

“God, knows your hearts.” (Luk 16:15)

“Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.” (Mat 4:10)

...ABOUT THE MOST IMPORTANT COMMANDMENT OF GOD

Jesus explained:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

(Matthew 22:37-40)

...ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF GOD

“Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” (Mar 10:15)

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.”

(Mat 7:21)

“I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and

the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.”
(Mat 5:20)

“I tell you the truth, unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God”...Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water [naturally] and the Spirit [spiritually].”
(John 3:3)

Just as natural life begins with a physical birth, so spiritual life begins with a spiritual birth.

“This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” (Mat 24:14)

“The righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”
(Mat 13:43)

...ABOUT FAITH IN GOD

“For God so loved the world that He gave his one and only Son [*Jesus*], that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”
(John 3:16-17)

“My Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son [*Jesus*] and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”
(John 6:40)

“When a man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. When he looks at me, he sees the one who sent me. I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.”
(John 12:44-46)

“Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing His work.”
(John 14:10)

“Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man [*Jesus*] will give you. On Him God the Father has placed His seal of approval. ”
(John 6:27)

...ABOUT US HUMANS

“Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” (Luk 18:17)

“If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but He sent me.”
(John 8:42)

“You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins.”
(John 8:23,24)

“Whoever belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.” (Joh 8:47)

Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!" (Luk 18:24)

...ABOUT TRUTHFULNESS:

“You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but keep the oaths you have made to the Lord’. But I tell you, ‘Do not swear at all’. Simply let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes’ and your ‘No’ be ‘No’...” (Matthew 5:33-34, 37)

“The reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth . Everyone on the side of truth listens to me." (Joh 8:37)

“God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”
(Joh 4:24)

“To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, ‘If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples [followers]. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.’” (Joh 8:31)

...ABOUT LOVE

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.”

“ ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” (Mar 12:30-31)

“You have heard that it was said: ‘Love your neighbour and hate your enemy’. But I tell you, ‘Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven.’”
(Matthew 5:43-48)

“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them.” (Luk 6:32)

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” (Joh 13:34)

“Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.” (Joh 14:21)

“I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts.” (Joh 5:42)

...ABOUT HYPOCRICY

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord', will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose and the wind blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

(Matthew 7:21-27)

... ABOUT PIETY

"Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honoured by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." (Matthew 6:1-4)

... ABOUT PRAYER ...

"When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by man. I tell you the truth; they have received their reward in full. When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. This is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one'. For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you."

(Matthew 6:5-15)

... ABOUT FASTING!

"When you fast, do not look sombre [i.e. don't show it] as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men

that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”

(Matthew 6:16-18)

... ABOUT HARAM AND HALAL

“Jesus called the crowd to Him and said: ‘Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. Nothing outside a man can make him unclean by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of man that makes him unclean’. ‘Are you so dull?’ He asked. ‘Don’t you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him unclean? For it doesn’t go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body’ ... He went on: ‘What comes out of a man is what makes him unclean. For from within, out of men’s hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these things come from inside and make a man unclean’.”

(Mark 7:14-15, 18-23)

All too often religious practices concern themselves with dietary and cleansing rituals that only clean the outside of the body. But Jesus explained:

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”

(Matthew 5:8)

That is why Jesus scolded the religious leaders:

“Woe to you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence!”

(Matthew 23:25)

Jesus addressed a number of issues regarding human relationships and our relationship with God. His words stir our minds and hearts.

...ABOUT MARRIAGE

The greatest problem in the world is that of broken relationships, and in particular our broken relationship with God. Jesus, according to his own statements, came primarily to reconcile us to God. But He also came to heal broken human relationships.

“Haven't you read that at the beginning the Creator made them male and female? For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.” (Matthew 19:4-6)

...ABOUT UNFAITHFULNESS IN MARRIAGE

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery’. But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Matthew 5:27-28)

...ABOUT DIVORCE

"It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.' But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery." (Mat 5:31-32)

"Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery." (Matthew 19:8-9)

...ABOUT MATERIALISM AND GREED

"Then He said to them: 'Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions'." (Luke 12:15)

"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property who will give you property of your own? No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money ."

(Luke 16:10-13)

...ABOUT ANXIETIES AND WORRIES

"I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself ."

(Matthew 6:25-34)

...ABOUT CHOICES

"He told them many things in parables, saying: 'A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because

they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop - a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. He who has ears, let him hear . . .

"Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom [of God] and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. What was sown on rocky places is the man who hears the word [*of God*] and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. What was sown among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. But what was sown on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown'." (Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23)

"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction [hell], and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it." (Matthew 7:13-14)

...ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES OF TRUST IN JESUS

"No servant is greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also." (John 15:20)

"All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved." (Matthew 10:22)

"A time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me." (John 16:2-3)

But Jesus comforts us:

"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven." (Matthew 5:11-12)

...ABOUT THE TERRIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN

"I tell you the truth, everyone who [keeps on doing] sins is a slave to sin." (John 8:34)

"If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off

and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.” (Matthew 5:29-30)

... ABOUT FORGIVENESS ...

“And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.”

(Mark 11:25)

“For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.” (Mat 6:14-15)

“If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. If he sins against you seven times a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, ‘I repent’, forgive him.” (Luke 17:3-4)

When one of Jesus’ disciples asked Him how many times he should forgive his brother, he probingly asked: “Seven times?” Jesus answered:

“I tell you, not seven times, but seventy times seven.”

(Matthew 18:22)

...AND HOW JESUS FORGIVES

We all know that God hates sin. Let us learn from Jesus how He, like God, forgives:

"Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, ‘Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?’ They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. When they kept on questioning Him, He straightened up and said to them, ‘If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her’. Again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, ‘Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?’ ‘No-one, sir’, she said. ‘Then neither do I condemn you’, Jesus declared. ‘Go now and leave your life of sin’.”

(John 8:1-11)

Even if we do not fall into the same category of ‘sinner’ as this woman – just think of *yourself* to be the accused – and ultimately you are! What would *you* think of Jesus after having been forgiven? If your heart is touched by Him, why don’t you ask Him to save you?

...ABOUT THE LOVE OF GOD

“The Father [God] Himself loves you because you have loved me [Jesus] and have believed that I came from God .”

(John 16:27)

“Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honour the one who serves me.”

(John 12:26)

“Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.” (Joh 14:21)

“Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.” (Joh 14:23)

"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.” (Joh 15:9)

“If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love.” (Joh 15:10)

“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.”

(Joh 15:13)

...ABOUT THE GRACE OF GOD...

“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee, and the other a tax collector [for the Roman enemies, a very despised person] The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like all other men - robbers, evildoers, adulterers - or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get’. But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said: ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner’. I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

(Luke 18:10-14)

Honestly! Which one of the two represents you? Remember, a Pharisee was a highly respected religious leader in the Jewish community. He adhered to a rigorous self-disciplined life-style in an effort to never even come near to break one of God’s Laws. But in his self-righteous deceit he gloried in his own achievements: his fasting, giving of alms, etc., assuming that by those efforts he would be acceptable to God. But Jesus explained:

“When you have done everything you were told to do, you should say: ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty’.”

(Luke 17:10)

Please note: There is no merit in doing our duty. It is expected from us.

A true follower of Jesus naturally aim to please Jesus. Perhaps it is a kind of 'thank you!' for saving his soul from hell. But it is more than that. It is because: "God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us." (Romans 5:5)

Let us look at a parable to 'hear' what Jesus says on the subject:

"Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

"Simon replied, 'I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven.' 'You have judged correctly,' Jesus said.

"Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, 'Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet.

"Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.' Then Jesus said to her, 'Your sins are forgiven.'

"The other guests began to say among themselves, 'Who is this who even forgives sins?'

Jesus said to the woman, 'Your faith has saved you; go in peace.'" (Luk 7:41-50)

Most of us probably never saw God in this light. We have been taught to pay a penalty to God for the sins we have committed. But what He desires is not a penalty from us, but our love, our heart! We notice that neither the lost son, nor the 'sheep' could repay their debt. A sin, once committed, can never be undone. To assume that we can in any way compensate for sins we committed, is a colossal misunderstanding or misjudgement of God's righteousness and holiness. Sin separates us from God. Therefore, we are totally and utterly dependent on what God does for us! Let us look at another parable to 'hear' what Jesus has to say on the subject:

Now let us come back to our actual subject. How often do we use the word 'grace' or 'gracious' without thinking of its actual meaning? Think of it! Jesus expresses, again in a metaphor, what grace truly means:

"There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my half of the estate'. So he divided his property between them. Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that

whole country and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. When he came to his senses, he said: 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men'. So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. The son said to him: 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son'. But the father said to his servant: 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found'. So they began to celebrate."

(Luke 15:11-24)

One thing we do have to learn here is that forgiveness cannot be merited or earned. A sin, once it is committed, can never be undone. A sin is a transgression of God's holy will for you! It is an affront towards Him! You offend Him! To assume that we can in any way compensate for the sins we committed, is a colossal underestimate or misjudgement of God's righteousness and holiness.

Sin separates us from God. Therefore, we are totally and utterly dependent on what God does for us! Consequently, forgiveness is always a gift of God to those who sincerely deeply and desperately desire it - and ask for it. Like this young man, we also need 'to come to our senses'. He was like us. He had nothing and was nothing. He did not even attempt to raise up his eyes to his father, or offer to him some kind of compensation for his wrongdoing. He couldn't do that anyway. Neither did his father expect it. The lost son simply wanted to be at Home with his Father – and that is what he did! And the Father accepted him, forgave him, and reinstated him. No strings attached. That is how God's Grace works.

If we are truly ashamed and deeply sorry for our sins and really experience the grace of God, we will never be the same again. Our gratitude will cause a new life in us. Jesus calls it a 'new birth'.

To those who light-heartedly or blindly by-pass the offer of Jesus, He gives a grave warning:

"You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes.

Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.”

“Therefore consider carefully how you listen.”

(Matthew 13:14-15 and Luke 8:18)

...ABOUT THE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS

“If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.” (Joh 15:19)

“I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.” (Joh 17:26)

“If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

(John 8:31-32)

“ . . . you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image (likeness) of its Creator.” (Colossians 3: 9 and 10).

That happens when we allow God to speak to us through His Word, and when live in close union with our heavenly Father.

NABI ISA IS MORE THAN A PROPHET

WHAT JESUS SAID ABOUT HIMSELF

HIS MESSAGE IS DIVINE, TRUTHFUL, AND CAN BE TESTED

“My teaching is not my own. It comes from Him who sent me. If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.”

(John 7:16)

HIS MESSAGE IS ETERNAL

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”

(Matthew 24:35)

HE CAME FROM HEAVEN, THAT IS FROM GOD

“No-one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven - the Son of Man.” [Jesus].

(John 3:13)

JESUS ALWAYS DID WHAT PLEASED HIS HEAVENLY FATHER

“The one who sent me is with me; He has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases Him.”

(John 8:29)

“‘My food’, said Jesus, ‘is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish His work’.”

(John 4:34)

WHY WE SHOULD BELIEVE JESUS

“Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me?”

(John 8:46)

Muslims believe that all prophets of God were sinless. That is not correct, as both the Qur'an and the Bible agree. The Qur'an calls only Jesus sinless or holy (Surah 19:19), while we read of the sins of Adam (Surah 7:22-23), Moses (Surah 28:15-16), Abraham (Surah 26:82), Jonah (Surah 37:141-144), David (Surah 38:24-25), and also of Muhammad (Surah 40:55, 47:19, 48:1-2).

WHICH 'GOOD WORK' ARE WE TO DO?

Speaking about himself, Jesus said:

“The work of God is this: to believe in the one He has sent.”

(John 6:29)

TO REJECT JESUS IS EQUAL TO REJECTING GOD

“He who rejects me rejects Him who sent me”.

(Luke 10:16)

JESUS DID NOT COME FOR THE RIGHTEOUS, BUT FOR THOSE WHO HAVE SINNED

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”

(Luke 19:10)

“It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

(Mark 2:17)

TO THE TIRED AND TROUBLED HE OFFERED HIS REST

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

(Matthew 11:28-30)

THERE IS NO LIFE WITHOUT WATER. SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING, JESUS OFFERS 'LIVING WATER' TO STILL OUR SPIRITUAL THIRST.

“If a man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.”

(John 7:37-38)

“Whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

(John 4:14)

MANY, ALSO RELIGIOUS PEOPLE LIKE THE PHARISEES AT THAT TIME, REJECTED JESUS

“I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts. I have come in my Father’s name and you do not accept me, but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him.”

(John 5:42-43)

IN AGREEMENT WITH THE CUSTOM OF THE TIME, JESUS OFTEN SPOKE OF HIMSELF IN THE THIRD PERSON. HERE HE MAKES A TREMENDOUS CLAIM FOR HIMSELF. WOULD HE LIE?

“Whoever believes in Him [Jesus] is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. This is the verdict: light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light.”

(John 3:18-21)

AT OTHER TIMES HE SPOKE PLAINLY

“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

(John 8:12)

“When a man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. When he looks at me, he sees the one who sent me. I have come into the world as a light, so that no-one who believes in me should stay in darkness.”

(John 12:44-46)

EVEN WHEN SPEAKING OF HIMSELF, JESUS OFTEN SPOKE IN PARABLES AND ALLEGORIES.

“I am the gate, whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”

(John 10:9-10)

“I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me - just as the Father knows me and I know the Father - and I lay down my life for the sheep.”

(John 10:14-15)

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”

(John 10:11)

JESUS LAID DOWN HIS LIFE VOLUNTARILY

“The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life - only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again.”

(John 10:17-18)

JESUS ASSURES FORGIVENESS ALREADY HERE AND NOW AS WELL AS ETERNAL LIFE

“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one.”

(John 10:27-28)

TO A WOMAN, WHOSE BROTHER LAZARUS HAD DIED AND BEEN IN A TOMB FOR THREE DAYS, JESUS SAID:

“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies... “.

(John 11:25,26)

Shortly after saying this, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

(John 11:43,44).

JESUS CLEARLY STATED THAT HE ALONE CAN OFFER ETERNAL LIFE

“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well.”

(John 14:6)

JESUS OFTEN USED METAPHORS TO ILLUSTRATE SPIRITUAL TRUTH

“The bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world ”.

(John 6:33)

“I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.”

(John 6:35)

“My Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day.”

(John 6:37-39)

“The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.”

(John 6:63)

PEOPLE WERE AMAZED ABOUT WHAT HE SAID

When Jesus had finished the famous 'Sermon on the Mount'

(Matthew 5-7), we read:

"...the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, not as their teachers of the law ”.

(Matthew 7:28)

"No one ever spoke the way this man does..."

(Joh 7:46)

"They were amazed at his teaching, because his words had authority ."

(Luk 4:32)

"**All** the people were amazed and said to each other, "What words these are! With authority and power he gives orders to impure spirits and they come out!"

(Luk 4:36)

BEFORE HIS DEATH, JESUS SPOKE TO HIS CLOSEST FOLLOWERS, SAYING:

“I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father.”

(John 16:28)

HE URGED HIS FOLLOWERS TO BELIEVE IN HIS DIVINITY

“Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father”.

“Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.”

(John 14:9-11)

IN A RECORDED PRAYER JESUS COMMUNED WITH HIS FATHER, REFERRING TO HIS OWN ETERNAL EXISTENCE

“Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.”

(John 17:5)

Because Jesus had a human mother, He appeared to be and actually was a real human person. Like us, He was hungry at times, and tired, He felt a need to pray, and experienced grief and pain. On the other hand he was the only person ever born of a virgin birth; He healed multitudes, raised several dead people, walked on a deep sea, forgave and forgives sins, calmed a storm and perform many other recorded miracles.

JESUS HAD A UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS FATHER

“They all asked, ‘Are you then the Son of God?’ He replied, ‘You are right in saying *I am*.’”

(Luke 22:70)

JESUS MADE A MOST EXTRAORDINARY CLAIM ABOUT HIMSELF

“I tell you the truth, before Abraham was born, *I am*!”

(John 8:58 [the emphases in the last two verses is done by the compiler])

It is important to note that “I am” in Hebrew is the same as “Jahveh”, the very name of God! By using this word, Jesus was claiming to be God incarnated in a human body. In the eyes of the Jewish religious authorities this was blasphemy, and punishable by death. - God is eternal. To Him there is no “was” or “will be”. “He always “is”. Therefore what Jesus was saying here really meant: “Before Abraham existed, I was already and eternally alive!”

THE CLAIM OF JESUS TO BE DIVINE, WAS AS UPSETTING TO MANY PEOPLE THEN, AS IT IS TODAY

“Again the Jews picked up stones to stone Him, but Jesus said to them, ‘I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?’ ‘We are not stoning you for any of these’, replied the Jews, ‘but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God’.”

(John 10:31-33)

In Jesus God was made visible and lived among people like you and me. He expressed His love for us by preparing us for heaven by forgiving our sins and create a pure heart in us. He wants us - me and you - to respond to His love and be where He is:

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you.”

(John 15:9)

“Greater love has no-one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.”

(John 15:13)

“I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be

with me that you also may be where I am.” (Joh 14:3)

SEVERAL TIMES JESUS SPOKE ABOUT HIS IMPENDING DEATH AND ITS PURPOSE

“The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”

(Matthew 20:28)

A ‘ransom’ is the price demanded to set a captive free. Jesus paid the price to set us free from the condemnation that the sins we committed deserve in the light of God's holiness. For the Israelites of old an animal sacrifice was accepted as a ‘substitute’ for the offender, provided he confessed his sins to God, his sorrow over these, and the willingness to shun them in the future. Jesus is the one and only sacrifice to be the ransom for our sin.

“‘We are going up to Jerusalem’, He said, ‘and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law. They will condemn Him to death and will turn Him over to the Gentiles, who will mock Him and spit on him, flog Him and kill Him. Three days later He will rise’.”

(Mark 10:33,34)

FACING HIS DEATH, JESUS AGONISED IN PRAYER

“He went away a second time and prayed, ‘My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done’.”

(Matthew 26:4)

JESUS BEFORE HIS WORLDLY JUDGES

It was not a godless mob that arranged to have Him arrested. They represented the supreme Jewish religious leaders of the day. They feared that this ‘carpenter from Nazareth’ was threatening their religious authority! At His arrest one of His companions drew a sword, wanting to resist and fight.

But Jesus asked:

“Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and He will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?”

(Matthew 26:53,54)

In order to understand the words ‘fulfilled Scriptures’, we ought to know that many hundreds of years before, certain events had been predicted by the prophets of the Old Testament. Many of these foretold important events regarding the future of Israel, including the return of the to their ancient land, which is so disputed today.

But just as astoundingly, the prophets told us of the pre-existence of Jesus in eternity, His miraculous birth by a virgin (see also in Surah Myriyam 19:16-21) and His divinity, His death by crucifixion and His

resurrection from the dead, had all been pre-recorded hundreds of years before He appeared.

EVEN AT HIS CRUCIFIXION JESUS THOUGHT OF OTHERS

“When they came to the place called The Skull, there they crucified Him, along with the criminals - one on His right, the other on His left. Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing’.”
(Luke 23:33,34)

AFTER HIS RESURRECTION HE SCOLDED TWO OF HIS FOLLOWERS FOR THEIR LACK OF FAITH

“How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter His glory?’ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning Himself.”
(Luke 24:25-27)

Some people have stipulated that Jesus did not actually die, but that He was taken down from the cross unconscious and later revived. This was quite impossible, for one of the soldiers, to make sure He was dead, pierced His chest with a spear before he was taken down (John 19:34).

DID JESUS REALLY DIE ON THE CROSS? HE VERIFIED THIS HIMSELF:

“I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades (hell).”
(Revelation 1:17,18)

Jesus did not come for the Jews only, as some believe. He said:

“This is what is written (in the Law): The Christ [Messiah] will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day; and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”
(Luke 24:46, 47)

39 DAYS AFTER HIS RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD JESUS WAS TAKEN TO HEAVEN BEFORE THE VERY EYES OF THE DISCIPLES. HIS LAST WORDS WERE:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.”
(Matthew 28:18-20)

It is hardly surprising that true Christians have a desire to make the Message of Jesus known - as it is done in this article.

THIS IS NOT THE END OF THE STORY, THOUGH. JESUS WILL RETURN TO THIS EARTH WHICH WILL BE FOLLOWED BY THE JUDGMENT DAY

“[God]The Father judges no-one, but has entrusted all judgement to the Son, that all may honour the Son just as they honour the Father. He who does not honour the Son does not honour the Father, who sent Him. I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in himself. And He has given Him authority to judge because He is the Son of Man. Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear His voice.”

(John 5:21-28)

TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE AND FOLLOW HIM JESUS SAYS:

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me ... I am going ... to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”

(John 14:1-3)

Jesus will come back. This time not to save, but to judge all those who refused to accept his offer of pardon and forgiveness. He therefore urges us to be prepared for His coming:

“You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”

(Luke 12:40)

He even told us how this is going to happen:

“You will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

(Mark 14:62)

“As the lightning comes from the East and flashes to the West, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.”

(Matthew 24:27)

Why is Jesus speaking of Himself as the ‘Son of Man’, and not as the ‘Son of God’? The title ‘Son of Man’ was first recorded in the Old Testament in the year BC 555:

"In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days [God] and was led into his presence. He was given authority; glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshipped Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and His kingdom is one that will never be destroyed."

(Daniel 7:13-14)

In the light of this statement we can easily see that there is really no difference between the 'Son of Man' and 'Son of God'.

The time to receive pardon and Jesus' offer of salvation is not yet over. Jesus is still waiting. He left us with an invitation:

"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in . . .".

(Revelation 3:20)

AND WHAT DOES THE QUR'AN TELL US ABOUT NABI ISA?

Isa, Jesus, is mentioned in the Qur'an 26 times by name and another 9 times by his title (Christ, that is the Messiah). Strangely, many Muslim teachers today allege that Jesus' message was given to the Jews only, even though the Qur'an mentions Jesus as being "a sign for **all** peoples." (Surah 21:91). We further read: "We believe in Allah, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob . . . to Moses and Jesus and that given to all prophets from their Lord. We make no differences between one and another of them" (Surah 2:136).

Those who declare that the Bible is no more 'Word of God', because it has been changed and corrupted, are contradicting the very Qur'an they claim to believe in, for the Qur'an teaches: "People of the Book . . . stand fast by the Law, the Gospel and all the revelation that has come to you from your Lord" (Surah 5:68). These words were written in the seventh century. Thousands of old Bible manuscripts that are still in existence today are considerably older than that, yet they do not differ from the Bible as it is available everywhere today. Surely it rests with Muslim teachers to substantiate their claim, and to tell us when and how the Bible has supposedly been changed, and why. What is their agenda?

The Qur'an actually challenged the first Muslims: "If you were in doubt as to what we [Allah] have revealed unto thee [Muhammad], then ask those who have been reading the Book from before thee" (Surah 10:94). Which Book? - The one given before the Qur'an.

The Qur'an even challenges the believers: "Ask those who possess the message" (Surah 21:7). In other words ask the Jews and Christians. Were they supposed to ask the people who had a falsified message? Surely not.

As we have already noticed, the Qur'an explicitly states that the Gospel is the Word of God. It also states categorically that "no man can change the Words of Allah" (Surah 10:64 and 6:34). Think of that!

HOW SURE CAN WE BE THAT ALL THIS IS TRUE?

One can believe all sorts of things. It is astonishing what people are prepared to believe when it comes to religion. Why? Just check on yourself! People believe that their religion is the right one, because they are told so, and because their family, friends and all the people in their cultural context do. And because we are right, the others must be wrong. How clever is that?

But how can we believe anything religious at all? How can we believe that the one message is of God, and not the other? Would God expect us to base our lives and with that our faith and trust on something that cannot be verified as coming from Him? Surely not! When God sends a message to mankind, He is bound to make sure that the readers or hearers of it can convince themselves beyond a doubt that they do not follow some kind of man-made religion. And He did it. You find out about your religion, and don't be satisfied by some feeble argument.

The Bible tells us that the evidence for its divine origin is within itself. It is fulfilled prophecy:

"You may say to yourselves, 'How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the LORD?'

"If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the LORD does not take place or come true, that is a message the LORD has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously, so do not be alarmed." (Deu 18:21-22)

"This is what the LORD says— Israel's King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty: 'I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God'. Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and lay out before me what has happened since I established my ancient people, and what is yet to come— yes, let them foretell what will come.

"Do not tremble, do not be afraid. Did I not proclaim this and foretell it long ago? You are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me? No, there is no other Rock; I know not one." (Isaiah 44:6-8)

Regarding the Truth of God, there is no better evidence than the prophecies God gave to the prophets of old - after they were fulfilled at a later date. Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel and others gave detailed predictions of the coming and life of Jesus the Messiah 750, 1000 or even more years before he was born by a virgin. God has given us a sign. It is up to us to take notice of it.

WHAT ZUL'KIFL SAID ABOUT NABI ISA

Zul-kifl (Surah 21:85) was a prophet of God in Israel about 750 years before Isa was born. His biblical name was Isaiah. He prophesied this:

"...the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. " (Immanuel translated means 'God with us') (Isaiah 7:14).

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. " (Isaiah 9:6).

In addition just read the prophecy on Nabi Isa, and what was later fulfilled at the end of His life on earth:

"He is despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgement, and who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgressions of My people He was stricken. And they made His grave with the wicked—and with the rich at His death, because He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. . . . By His knowledge my righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities . . . He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." (Isaiah 53: 3–12 AV. The fulfilment of this prophecy 750 years later can be read in the Injil, the Gospel, in Luke 23:32-46).

IN THE SAME WAY KING DAWOOD (DAVID) PROPHECIED

"My strength is dried up like a potsheer, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death. Dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing." (Psalm 22:14 – 18. The fulfilment of this prophecy is found in John 19:17-24).

DECISIONS HAVE CONSEQUENCES

These are just a few of the many prophecies that were fulfilled in and through Jesus. No honest person can deny that these have been sent by God - or argue that their fulfilment also fits any other person. It does not!

The offer of God's pardon through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross may be taken lightly. Worse still, it can be rejected. But it should be thankfully accepted to allow God to purify us, and truly be the God of our lives, so that we may serve Him with an undivided heart! Remember, Jesus is the key:

“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well.” (Joh 14:6)

“Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.” (Joh 14:23)

But there may well be a price to it:

“Remember what I told you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also.” (Joh 15:20)

Must we not be afraid? Remember:

“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand.” (Joh 10:27-28)

Peter, an Apostle of Jesus describes this by his own experience:

“... you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.

These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith — of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire — may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.” [when he returns to this earth].

“Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls”.
(1Pe 1:6-9)

This reflects the condition of those who have decided to turn away from all that God hates, even if they never will be perfect in this life. But they asked for, and received forgiveness. They were reconciled to God by the sacrifice of Jesus who suffered and died for their sins. That is Grace:

“As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ... gratifying the cravings of our flesh [sinful nature] and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest [of mankind], we were by nature deserving of [God's] wrath.

But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from

yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.”

(Eph 2:1,3-5,8)

ALL THE MANY QUOTES FROM NABI ISA, JESUS, HAVE GIVEN YOU SOME INSIGHT INTO WHAT HE TAUGHT, WHO HE IS, AND WHAT HE DID.

TO EVALUATE WHAT YOU HAVE BY NOW DISCOVERED, ANSWER FIVE QUESTIONS – JUST FOR YOURSELF:

- 1. IS IT GOOD?**
- 2. IS IT TRUE?**
- 3. IS IT DESIRABLE?**
- 4. DO I WANT IT?**
- 5. AM I WILLING TO RECEIVE GOD’S OFFER OF GRACE?**

IF YOU ANSWERED ALL FIVE QUESTIONS WITH “YES!”, YOU SURELY WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT JESUS – AND IN ADDITION WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD INSPIRED TO SOME OF THE APOSTLES OF JESUS. TOGETHER THAT IS CALLED THE ‘NEW TESTAMENT’.

WE SUGGEST YOU GET YOURSELF A ‘NEW TESTAMENT’ AND STUDY IT. AT THE SAME TIME, FIND OTHER TRUE CHRISTIANS WITH WHOM YOU CAN SHARE YOUR FAITH, AND TO LEARN FROM THEM.

IF YOU COME FROM A MUSLIM BACKGROUND AND LIKE TO COMPARE THE QUR’AN WITH THE BIBLE, ASK FOR A FREE COPY OF ‘YOUR BOOK AND MY BOOK’.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT JESUS AND THE BIBLE, ASK US FOR THE FREE BOOKLET CALLED ‘DEAR ABDULLAH’.

IN ANY CASE, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT US AT:

THE MESSAGE OF NABI ISA

info@lifechallenge.de

This booklet was compiled by Gerhard Nehls

(Unless otherwise stated, all quotations from the Bible follow the translation of the New International Version,).

“I am the vine you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. — As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My commandment is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.”

(John 15:5-15)

“Then Jesus told them this parable: ‘Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulder and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbours together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep’. I tell you that in the same way there is more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.”

(Luke 15:3-7).

By now we understand how to interpret parables. Read one more. Here is the set-up: A Pharisee [you can compare him with a ‘*Hafiz*’] had invited Jesus for dinner. “A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume.

“As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

“When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, ‘If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner.’

Jesus answered him, "**Simon, I have something to tell you.**" "Tell me, teacher," he said.

"Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.

Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven."

"**You have judged correctly,**" Jesus said.

Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "**Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my**

feet [as was the custom], but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.

You did not give me a kiss [as was the custom], but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet.

You did not put oil on my head [as was the custom], but she has poured perfume on my feet.

Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little."

Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

The other guests began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"

Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace." (Luk 7:37-50)

"Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and manifest myself to him."

(John 14:21)

"A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."

(John 13:34)

JESUS TAUGHT US ABOUT OUR DEPENDENCE ON GOD - AND GOD'S WILLINGNESS TO RESPOND

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. Who of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will our Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!"

(Matthew 7:7-11)

JESUS IS LOOKING FOR 'FRUIT' IN US

"A man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it, but did not find any. So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?' 'Sir', the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig round it and fertilise it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.'"

(Luke 13:6-9)

Do we get the message? Jesus did not mean to give a lecture on agriculture. He talked to people in pictures or symbols they could understand. In this case, God planted the fig tree, by implication you are the fig tree – and the rest you can easily figure out.

What does the Bible refer to when speaking of 'fruit'? It consists of 'love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness and self-control' (Galatians 5:23). Only evil people and fools will not wish to 'grow' such fruit in their lives.

“You know that the rulers of the Gentiles [i.e. non-Jews] lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave.”
(Matthew 20:25-27)