

AL HIDAYA: RIGHT GUIDANCE

*ABDUL ILAH,
The Servant of the Lord*

Ahmad (a Muslim) visits **Jacob** (a Jew) and finds him with a copy of the Jewish Scriptures in his hands. They enter into conversation.

Ahmad: Well, Jacob, you seem to be very deep in thought.

Jacob: Indeed; I am rather puzzled over what I have been reading in our prophet Isaiah; he tells us much about one whom he calls «the Servant of the Lord.»

Ahmad: I am rather interested; perhaps you would read to me what it is he says.

Jacob: In Isaiah, chapter 42: verse 1, he begins like this, «Behold My Servant, whom I uphold; mine elect in whom My soul delights...»

Ahmad: Evidently he was Allah's⁽¹⁾ favourite slave.

Jacob: «...I have put My Spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles...»

Ahmad: He must be a prophet too; it seems plain so far.

Jacob: Yes; but you have only heard the beginning yet; there are many other statements: I will read a few, «A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench...» (verse 3).

Ahmad: Symbolical language, surely; indicating his

(1) At the time of this conversation, Ahmad didn't know yet that the correct Arabic rendering for (God) is «al ilah», not «Allah», which is a proper name that didn't appear in the original text of the Bible.

tenderness and consideration for the weak.

Jacob: Probably; but it continues, «He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles wait for his law» (verse 4). You see, he also exercises justice and judgment among men.

Ahmad: Does it say to what people he comes?

Jacob: Yes; it goes on, «I the Lord ...will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people (that seems to mean the Lord's chosen people, Israel) for a light of the Gentiles (the rest of Mankind)», (verse 6).

Ahmad: A world-wide commission!

Jacob: That is so; and his work is «to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house» (verse 7).

Ahmad: It seems he is a doctor and deliverer also. People would welcome one like him!

Jacob: That's the strange thing; he suffers terribly from men. In chapter 50, verse 6, he says, «I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.»

Ahmad: I never heard of such a thing! Doing such wonderful works for the people — yet they treat him like that?

Jacob: You haven't heard the worst yet: in chapter 52, verse 14, are these words, «His visage (face) was so

marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men,» and in chapter 53, verse 3, «He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised and we esteemed him not.»

Ahmad: Ah! if I had been there, I *would* have esteemed him.

Jacob: I also. It goes on further to say, «Surely he hat borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted» (verse 4).

Ahmad: Those who thought that Allah had smitten and afflicted him were very foolish. Allah only smites those who disobey Him.

Jacob: Yes; but if so, why does he suffer at all? I have noticed the prophet goes on to say, «But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.» (verse 5).

Ahmad: You mean he suffers for other's people sins — but whose sins are meant?

Jacob: It says, «*All* we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned *every one* to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us *all*» (verse 6).

Ahmad: But what good does it do to us if another suffers for our sin?

Jacob: You remember in verse 5 we read, «With his stripes we are healed;» that evidently means his sufferings result in healing for others — and spiritual healing seems clearly to be meant.

Ahmad: Well — yes — I admit that gives me a new thought — if I knew my sins brought suffering to one who was my friend it would give me the desire to stop sinning.

Jacob: Yes, that is so; and, as a Jew, I know that our forefathers were taught through God's servant Moses to seek the forgiveness of sins by offering the sacrifice of certain animals, which suggests that offering is necessary for the wiping out of sin: we have the thought of sacrifice in this passage, for it says, «He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.» (verse 7).

Ahmad: But if a man was as good as this one Allah would *never* let him be killed in such a way! — He would deliver him, as when Ibrahim was about to sacrifice his son.

Jacob: Still, the words are plain; the prophet says, «For the transgression of My people was he stricken: and he (or, they) made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich (man) in his death...» (verses 8 and 9), and in verse 12, «He was numbered with the transgressors.»

Ahmad: But surely Allah is just! — He would not allow such a person to end his life in such shame and disgrace!

Jacob: But some of the words here have made me think that death is not the end of him. Listen to this, «When Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.» (verses 10 and 11). I confess that all this has made me think hard — it was written in the Holy Scriptures hundreds of years before Jesus Christ, and yet it fits in so closely with what the Christians teach concerning him.

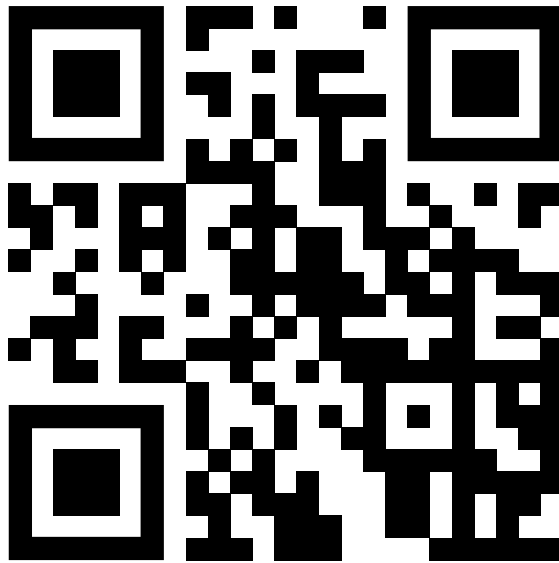
Ahmad: Well, these words are all new to me: I did not know until now that any Jewish prophet had ever written such things. I wonder if this is one of the reasons why some of those I have met who seem to be true Christians are so sure they have the truth? What do you say — Abdul Masih's home is quite near — he is a Christian — shall we call and ask him whether he believes these words refer to Jesus Christ, or Nabi Isa⁽²⁾ as we call him?

(They call on Abdul Masih and ask his thoughts on the matter).

Abdul Masih: Yes, there is only One Person Who has ever fulfilled the message of the prophet Isaiah about the suffering Servant of the Lord, and that One is the Lord Jesus Christ. If you are willing to read the message of the Gospel you will see for yourselves how all was fulfilled

(2) The correct Name is Jesus Christ as appeared in the original text of the Bible and not Nabi Isa.

in Jesus Christ. In one place, Peter, a disciple of Christ, declares, «God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: Who wen about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him. And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; Whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed Him openly; not to all people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead. And He commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick (or, living) and dead. To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His Name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.» (The Injil, Acts 10. 38–43). I can assure you that the Injil has been handed down reliably from the beginning without corruption — we have proof of this which we will gladly give you if you desire it — moreover, it has been translated into hundreds of languages, and says the same thing in every one. Will you accept a copy from me and read it for yourselves?



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