

40  
OF GOD'S  
THE TRAIL  
FOLLOWING  
PROMISES

CHALLENGE





**40** FOLLOWING  
OF GOD'S PROMISES  
**CHALLENGE**

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## Challenge 40

# God's Perfect Plan of Salvation

*Genesis 1:1-3; John 1:1-5*

Before us are two biblical texts that talk about the beginning. In the Book of Genesis, we learn about the creation of heaven and earth, about the initial formlessness, chaos and darkness. But everything changes when God speaks and says: "Let there be light." This is that powerful Word about which we learn in the Gospel of John - that it was before creation, that it was with God during creation, and that that Word is God himself. It is through this Word that life and light come - which no darkness can overcome. It is through this Word, which proclaims the existence of light, that God immediately brings order into chaos and brings life where life had not been possible. God, who is the Word, Life and Light, has been available to humans, whom he created in his own image, since the beginning of human history, and offers them close fellowship. However, people often choose the harder path, move away from God, get lost and wander, and then wonder where God is... And, from the beginning, God has had a perfect plan for mankind that included light, and he never gave up on that plan, regardless of all the darkness that

has imposed itself throughout human history. Indeed, man himself persistently dims that light with his way of thinking and living, but God strengthens and brightens it again and again with his gracious action until the fullness of time has been fulfilled.

The theme of this year's Challenge 40 is the history of salvation, and we called it *Following the Trail of God's Promises*. For the next 40 days, we want to think together about God's perfect plan of salvation, which is visible throughout the entire history of mankind, starting with the creation of the world and Adam, through Noah, Abraham, and David until the coming of the promised Messiah Jesus Christ.

## 40 Days of fasting together

Like every year, *Challenge 40* represents a time of preparation for Holy Week and the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This year we have thought about giving up something every day during the entire Challenge. So the idea is that we would give up different things for several days, and in this way, through a continuous fast of 40 days, we can ask God to speak into our lives through His Word and these written texts/reflections. We encourage, but also challenge, all readers of Challenge40 to faithfully sacrifice and persevere!

### CATEGORIES OF FASTING

Days 1-4: TV: movies and series

Days 5-9: social networks and scrolling

Days 10-19: caffeine and sweets

Days 20-25: radio and music

Days 26-30: buying things that are not necessary for life

Days 31-40: sleep (wake up earlier than usual and spend time with God)

# 1

## A Perfectly Created World

*Genesis 1-2:4*

The scenario, in the abbreviated version, looks something like this: Out of darkness, nothingness and emptiness, God creates light and the whole earth, and fills it with living beings. God creates and imagines everything that we often “take for granted” today, while we fail to stop for a moment and admire the creativity of creation. Darkness and light, day and night, land and sea, sun and moon - so many contrasts that are so beautifully designed and meaningful, each in its own right! Living beings that differ in countless ways, and yet each of them has “its own place under the sun”. Have we ever stopped to think about how everything was designed in detail, perfectly executed, and how much love was shown to man in the very act of creating the world we know today? And then comes mankind as the pinnacle of creation. A living being that, we could say, is at the top of the hierarchical order, - created for something deeper than all beings up to that point. Man was created to enter into a close relationship with the Creator. But he also bears the greatest responsibility before all creation and before God himself. At the end of creation, God was satisfied with everything he made. Everything created was good and he could take a day off from work. A perfect world was created - one in which God rules and all creation lives as it was intended.

## 2

# Perfectly Created Man

*Genesis 1:26-27*

It's hard for us to imagine perfection. To me it is similar to eternity. When I think about it, I mostly stare steadily at one point without blinking until I realize that my mind can't perceive it, then I wince and continue doing what I was doing before. Without any clever conclusion.

Although it is hard for us to imagine, God created us in His image, to be like Him. Perfect and flawless. In addition, we received a great privilege. We were given authority over the entire earth and everything that lives on it. Of course, with this privilege comes an enormous responsibility. We are responsible for how we treat that which is entrusted to us.

Maybe right now you see yourself very far from that initial perfection and it seems unattainable. You may wonder if the people around you see God's image in your life. We were created perfect but we didn't stay perfect. We went our own way and believed that we knew better. Fortunately for us, the story doesn't stop there. We are not left to wander on our own path that we have chosen, but God, because of his perfect love, shows us the right path. That's grace.

Ask Jesus to show you what things you can do better. Ask him to give you the strength you need to make the necessary changes in your life. The responsibility given to us is still ongoing, so that we can become more and more like our Creator.

*\*To see a practical challenge for today, go to the end of the booklet and find "Practical challenges", or watch a video on the Baptistička Crkva Zagreb YouTube channel.*

# 3

## Made for a Perfect Relationship

*Genesis 2:15-25*

The Garden of Eden - a wealth of flora and fauna, gold and precious stones, rivers that water it... And God and Adam walk through the garden in the cool of the day... And God made Adam a helpmate; from Adam God made Eve. God created man, and woman was seen in him and then shaped from him. Even when she did not yet exist, God considered in his mind that Eve was a part of Adam.

She was completely one with Adam in all his dignity and all his glory. He did not rule over her, but with her. He was the master of all creation, and she was one with him.

And all creation was subject to their common rule.

Jesus says in Matthew 5:8: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"

Adam and Eve looked at each other with a pure heart, they looked God in the face with a pure heart, and they dwelt in His presence.

And they were naked, and they felt no shame, because they were honest, without pretense; they were what they are - themselves, authentic! They accepted themselves completely, grateful for the gift of life, for their body and their soul, their emotions and thoughts. And then the choice happens...

Since the beginning of human history, God has been available to mankind whom he created in his own image, and offers them close fellowship. Thank God for His perfect plan for us and that He has never given up on that plan.

# 4

## Able (Free) to Sin

*Genesis 3:8-13*

At the very beginning, God gives man a choice; to be satisfied with what he has or to search for something that is still missing. The man failed his first obedience test. Because of just one bad decision, everything changed, and sin became everyday life.

Deep inside, Adam and Eve knew that they had sinned, they knew that they were “naked”, and in their shame they began to persistently hide from God, and from each other with fig leaves. This is how the distance was created not only between man and woman but also between God and mankind. This separation from God still characterizes the person who has not repented of their sin.

It is interesting, and even funny, that both ‘sinners’ knew who the culprit was. Adam blamed Eve, and Eve blamed the snake. The snake was the only one who didn’t try to justify itself, it knew there was no excuse and very quickly a drastic punishment was pronounced!

We have all sinned and are prone to sin. It seems so natural.

After a committed sin, God still wants us to be near him, - he calls us: ‘Where are you?’ God wants us to ask for forgiveness and settle accounts with Him. Unlike the time period from our text, our guilt is completely covered by Christ’s sacrifice.

We ask God for wisdom and a sharpened conscience so that we can make the right decisions for our lives. Let’s not look for a culprit and excuses for our sin. Let’s accept Christ’s sacrifice and we will be forgiven.

# 5

## The Wickedness of the Human Race

*Genesis 6:5-7*

Jesus often spoke about his second coming and the end of the world. The days will be like the time in which the prophet Noah lived. In the Bible, we read that at that time mankind's wickedness was so great that his every thought was evil. Not only words and actions, but also every thought! This made God so sad in his heart, that he regretted making man. Because of such complete human depravity, he made a difficult decision - to destroy all of mankind. Their own choice was sin. In this way, they brought condemnation upon themselves. The great flood that then occurred was not caused by what we now refer to as global warming.

Just like in Noah's time, we are witnessing wickedness on earth today. All around us we can see the results of evil that starts from thoughts, progresses through words - all the way to actions. Blatant lies and fraud, theft, corruption, bribery, violence of every kind and various other types of depravity. The rulers of this world commit great evils, but even ordinary people are not excluded from this. In Noah's day, God offered people a way out that was meant for those who trust in Him. In his grace he finds a solution for salvation, just like today.

Dear friend, salvation is in Jesus! The one who believes in Him and accepts Him as his savior does not have to fear the end of the world, because He will become your ark that leads you to eternal life.

# 6

## Noah as a Shining Example

*Genesis 6:8-9*

In the time in which Noah lived, people lived corrupted lives and forgot about God. But not Noah! He lived in a close relationship with God. We are told in God's Word that he was righteous and blameless in his generation. Miraculous! Just imagine that scene! He was recognizable through his actions, words and attitudes that were different from the generation of that time. He showed himself to be a faithful servant of God.

Without a close relationship with God, Noah would not have been able to live differently. He would probably be like any other man, overcome by fallen human nature and the enemy. He had to draw his strength from that close relationship with God. That is why God shared his plans with Noah. What a gift it is - that the Creator of all existence wants to share his dreams, wishes, thoughts and intentions with you. Are we open to the Lord sharing his desires and plans with us? Do we set ourselves apart for this relationship and do we allow His words to penetrate deep into us, to change us, and make us more like Him, so that we can live as examples of His presence and His love on Earth?

I want us to seek God's face and to dwell in His presence. Let our lives be shining examples that will reflect what it looks like to live in a close relationship with God, in all times, both the good and the bad.

# 7

## God Who Punishes Sin

*Genesis 6:11-13; 7:11-24*

When God regretted creating man on earth (Gen. 6:6), it didn't mean that he had abandoned the idea that he had *in the beginning* - to create order and the *Imago Dei* as he did in man. After 6 days of creation (Genesis 1:31) God saw that *everything* created was *very good*. Yet now, because of human sin, punishment follows for all of creation. But God saw Noah, "a righteous man, blameless in his generation." The way in which sin took root in the human heart was so deep, that the *whole* earth was filled with violence (Gen. 6:11,13), and only by complete annihilation and flood could sin be punished and wiped out. The order of creation has been reversed (Genesis 1:9), and the water has wiped *everything* off the face of the earth (Genesis 7:23).

In the modern context of life, this type of judgment by God often seems distant and foreign to us. On the other hand, we may sing the old Christian Hymn (Heb. 13:8) "Yesterday, today, forever - Jesus is the same" and remember that He does not change. In relation to Noah's time, if we look at the world around us, human sin is not trivial. It is often difficult for Christians to understand the 'God of the Old Testament' and the God who is so stern toward sin. But we have forgotten the price of our blessed life - this time of grace has a very high price indeed. God's most valuable and most precious, the atoning sacrifice and the cross, - it "settles our accounts" and pays the penalty. Jesus Christ takes upon himself all the pain and suffocation from the flood of today's world, - from the sins of you and me.

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# 8

## Noah's Obedience

*Genesis 6:13 - 7:10*

The Bible says about Noah that he was a pious and blameless man among his contemporaries, and in one translation it says that Noah walked with God. Does this mean that Noah was loved and respected by the people because of this? It's kind of hard for me to believe that. Noah decided to ignore what people said about him and listen to God's instructions word for word. Because of his closeness to God, Noah saw what the world around him had turned into. He knew that punishment would come to the people and that the discord created by the willful rejection of God was the cause of the terrible destruction that was about to happen. No one but Noah believed it! Although God warned that His Spirit would depart from them if they continued, the people ignored everything, even the utter folly of making a huge ark in the middle of dry land. They missed seeing the multitude of animals climbing into the ark. **THEY DID NOT BELIEVE IT!**

Noah was saved by faith and obedience to God's command. By obeying that same command, his household and many living species were saved. He is the heir of covenants and promises because of obedience. It is truly worth teaching yourself and your household obedience to God's word because obedience is a reflection of faith in God who gives salvation and eternal life.

Moving away from God and his words and not caring about His will means - FLOOD, even today.

Let us decide to believe and be obedient to the Word of God embodied in Jesus Christ. Today is the day of salvation!

# 9

## The Making of the First Covenant

*Genesis 9:8-17*

We usually associate the scene of the first Covenant with a rainbow as its sign. However, I suspect that many of us have always read this passage such that we immediately see in it God's promise to humanity - to us, the people. God promises to never again threaten such a catastrophe of the earth that would bring mankind to the brink of destruction. However, if we allow ourselves a little more careful observation, we will notice that God makes this covenant with all living creatures. What's more, he places the rainbow as a pledge of the covenant between Him and the earth. The covenant promise is meant for every living thing on this planet. And if God pledges not to bring his creation to the brink of destruction, then why does it seem that we, as the crown of creation, are trying to push nature, flora and fauna over that edge with our way of life? And where did we get the idea that we could avoid that destruction, especially if we see that God himself views man as an inseparable part of his creation? It will be far wiser if we remember that the first covenant that God made is still valid. So the next time we see a rainbow, let us think about what we are ready to do, such that together with this precious living world we can await that final redemption, in anticipation of which "the whole creation has been groaning together" (Romans 8:22).

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# 10

## God Calls Abraham

*Genesis 12:1-4a*

In these lines we read how Abraham came to Canaan. At the age of 75, he heard God's voice, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you." Abraham moves from Haran with everything he has. God promises him blessing and protection, because "Abraham went, as the Lord told him". Does God speak to us today, or does it only happen in the Bible? If we ask ourselves this question, and we are not sure of its answer, we should know that God most certainly has spoken directly to every Christian at least once, and that every Christian has heard God's voice at least once and was obedient to him. It was a call to conversion. Only God can confront a person with their sin, and by His grace lead a person to repentance and conversion. After this conversion, the person is also blessed. But what about that communication after our conversion? Does God speak to us today? Do we hear him? First of all, we must create space for God's voice, give God space, and the right to speak to us. God does not want to interfere with our desires and needs, but directs us with His purpose and reason.

Lord, please forgive us for the fact that the spaces we have for you are often occupied by other things, - maybe even things of Christian character, - but they aren't open spaces, available for you to speak to us. Grant that we would hear you and obey you and feel the beauty of your blessings and protection.

# 11

## On a Journey With God

*Genesis 12: 4-9*

That feeling when you have so many prayer needs that you don't know where to start...

That was the feeling I had one afternoon when I decided to write down all my needs in my prayer notebook. At the same time, it was a feeling of letting go of my worries. That evening I prayed for the same.

After that, there followed a month of living out my obligations and circumstances, but also stagnation in prayer. However, after that same month, I remembered my prayer and realized that my prayers were answered! I was jumping for joy and thanking God, and I thought, what would have happened if I had prayed every day! Abraham is remembered for many things, but mostly for his living relationship with God. On such a long journey, according to the Word, his prayer was like a conversation between a father and son. In addition to speaking, he listened, but also argued with God. Abraham felt God's guidance on his journey, and he often built altars as a sign of gratitude to God in different places. But he certainly had moments of doubt, despair and anger. All this was part of his conversation with God.

I don't have a recipe for an answer to prayer, but I know that God doesn't leave a sincere and thirsty heart, and apparently it doesn't matter to him how often we pray for something, but rather how deep our relationship with him is.

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# 12

## The Promise of Offspring

*Genesis 15:1-6*

Abraham, then still called Abram, was a God-fearing and God-obeying man. In today's concept of human lifespan he was very old, maybe 80-90 years. He was blessed with great wealth in cattle, silver and gold. Everything did not always go smoothly, but obedience to God brought him a favorable way out of all situations. God addresses Abraham in an apparition during which Abraham expresses his disappointment at his lack of offspring. But God promises to fulfill that need, even though it sounds impossible considering his and Sara's age. "Abram believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness." This was followed by the making of a covenant between the two.

I think about the blessings and well being - mine and those of my family. About everything I have and receive, that I'm not really sure I deserve. About how the Lord speaks to me, often and in different ways. About the miracles that happen in my life.

Am I thankful enough for the untold abundance, peace and prosperity? For a warm home and family? Am I listening to what God is telling me and am I responding to His revelations? Am I keeping my faith fresh by seeing the miracles he performs?

Abraham wanted offspring, but I'm not sure he was aware of how powerful the answer to his prayer would be. What do we want? Even if we do know, we can't even imagine how much more God can make of it!

# 13

## The Father of Many Nations

*Genesis 17:1-8*

God's plan of salvation is already in motion with Abraham, promising him that he will be a father of many nations, Abraham believed it and God held him righteous. Yet Sarah convinces Abraham later to do things his own way by getting Hagar pregnant in chapter 16.

How patient are we to wait for God's promises to come true? His promises are sweet to hear but in today's society we want them to be fulfilled right here, right now. We may remember times when we have been like Abraham, have done things our own way, but ended up coming back to God and realising that His plan was always the best.

Since the first time I came to Croatia in 1999, I knew that God had plans to use me here. When I stayed out here for three months in 2001, I realised that I was not ready and it was not time for God to use me out here. God moulded me through experiences elsewhere so that I would be ready in 2012. God promised Abraham that he would become the father of many, and fulfilled that promise. I don't know what you've heard from God, but I encourage you to be patient and remember that His promises always come true and at the right time.

# 14

## The Birth of Isaac

*Genesis 21:1-8*

Promises for us are often things easily made and broken. I will be there, I will do it -- I promise. However, we generally justify a broken promise due to sickness, busyness, forgetfulness and other natural circumstances that can happen. But God has no physical limitations; the laws of nature or circumstance cannot force God to break His promises. And not only are his promises not bound by nature, they are always miraculous.

God promised Abraham that he would have a child with Sarah, despite their old age. Though physically improbable, even impossible, Abraham and Sarah did have a child. God named him Isaac (meaning: he laughs) probably because Abraham and Sarah laughed at the idea of having a child; they could not imagine it happening. God did not change Isaac's name as he did for Abraham and Jacob, but in the New Testament he is referred to as "the son of promise". Moreover, in Galatians 4:28 it says that we who believe are like Isaac, born of promise. Do we see ourselves as the result of a miracle? We might not have been born in a specific, miraculous way, - yet, when we think of how God takes a sinful human heart and cleans it, creating a new heart that can dwell with Him for eternity! Even having a child in old age doesn't seem as impossible or as miraculous as what God has worked in us!

# 15

## The Great Test

*Genesis 22:1-14*

When encountering this dramatic episode in the lives of Abraham and Isaac, we are easily shocked and horrified by God's request of Abraham that he sacrifice his long-desired and unexpectedly and miraculously received son, Isaac. How could he ask for such a sacrifice? And then we - who today try in all possible "creative" ways to avoid any trials by any sort of renunciation or sacrifice of our own way of life, decision-making, direction of our life's path or that of our children and loved ones - are even more shocked by Abraham's biblical, unconditional willingness to do what God expects from him.

At the same time, we don't seem to notice how we gradually, imperceptibly sacrifice our lives and the lives of our families and loved ones to the various modern gods of career, success, acceptance, money, self-realization, untouchability, fashionable values and arrogance. We delude ourselves, thinking that we can be sovereign planners of our own destinies, as well as those of others. God seems good to us as long as he helps us, fulfills our wishes and dreams, surprises us with the occasional miracle along the trail of our plans and longings. But when he confronts us with some important question, challenge, demand, test...? When he puts a big question mark on our way of life? Or an exclamation point? Or does it seem that the endpoint of some life story dear to us is in sight?

A trial/test is a new, challenging ingredient that God puts into our beaker in the laboratory of life. And he asks for a decision. He puts before us a choice: believe him or go solo? Abraham emerged from his trial as the Father of Faith. How will we emerge from ours?

# 16

## The Reward for Obedience

*Genesis 22:15-18*

When God put Abraham to the test, it was a great challenge and certainly a difficult decision to make - to obey or not to obey. Abraham decided to obey God, although he probably did not see the meaning of this demanding sacrifice that God had asked of him, and he certainly could not know where it would all lead. He could not have known that from the beginning God had a different plan, but Abraham's obedience and his loyalty to God was tested.

Like Abraham, we too have a choice when we are tested because God created us as beings with free will. When God asks us to obey, He does it for our good. It is up to us to trust Him because He is the one who sees the bigger picture. I believe that everyone can remember how many times God worked everything for good, but often we only see it when looking backward. But that's exactly why we can trust Him, because our God never fails and He loves us without end. Abraham experienced the consequences of his obedience already for himself - God poured out His blessing on him, but also on his descendants. It also extended to us - "all the nations of the earth will be blessed by your offspring" (verse 18).

Let's think about what our obedience to God can bring to our lives and what kind of blessings it can bring to the people around us. Let's not forget - the choice is ours.

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# 17

## Concern for Our Offspring

*Genesis 24:1-7; 50-51*

In Genesis chapter 24, we read about Abraham's desire that his son, Isaac, have a wife from their homeland because, according to God's promise, he would give the land to his descendants. That is why Abraham's concern went so far that he asked the servant to promise that he would not look for a wife from another nation, but only from his own kinsmen.

When we think about caring for our descendants, we can direct our thoughts in two ways, - as parents towards our offspring or as believers towards the younger generations. What is the role of parents towards their offspring, what behaviors and characters do children see in their parents? What kind of example of faith do we show and leave to the younger generations in the church? How much is Abraham's concern for posterity related to this? If we look at relationships with offspring in terms of a garden, how do gardeners take care of a garden? Do we water it or just plant it and let it grow wild? In caring for offspring, the kind of examples we set are important, - whether they are seeds of joy and encouragement, or of anxious worries and bitterness, - because these are our impressions that leave a mark on our descendants.

God's love of acceptance and encouragement are glimmers that are reflected through the lives of parents, - physical and spiritual. This is how our offspring will be able to build a life based on the biblical verses *"Listen, my son, to your father's instruction, And do not ignore your mother's teaching; For they are a graceful wreath for your head and necklaces for your neck."* (Proverbs 1:8-9)

# 18

## Isaac Under God's Protection

*Genesis 26:17-25*

While Isaac was living in Gerar, in Philistia, the God of Abraham blessed him so much that he became richer and richer, having acquired flocks and numerous servants. As a newcomer, he caused envy among the Philistines, who rebelled against him, stopped up his wells and told him to leave.

Although he was “much mightier than they”, Isaac did not oppose them, but went to the valley of Gerar, pitched his tents and dug up his father’s buried wells. Wells were crucial for the life of people and livestock. He also dug new wells and found spring water. God, according to his promise, was with him and blessed him. Because of the quarrel with the shepherds of Gerar, he named those wells Sitnah and Esek and he moved and dug a new well called Rehoboth because God gave him a place to live. Isaac found his peace in the city of his father Abraham, in Beersheba. By faith, he accepted God’s promise “Do not be afraid, for I am with you”, and built an altar to Yahweh who had appeared to him. He settled there, and the servants began to dig a well.

By faith in His promises and protection, Isaac was part of the fulfillment of God’s great plan and a testimony to the people where he lived. And to us, today, God says “Do not be afraid” through the incarnate Emmanuel, and we are part of the same plan and a testimony of His faithfulness.

# 19

## Jacob Becomes Israel

*Genesis 32:23 -31*

A restless night. One of those sleepless ones.

Jacob goes through the events in his head, represses them, - but sleep does not come. He faces his failures, omissions, lies and deceptions. For a long time, he has been haunted by the knowledge that he deceived his father Isaac, took away the birthright and blessing from his brother Esau. And he tricked Laban, but managed to make a covenant with him. Now Esau is coming to meet him. Jacob is frozen in fear. Esau will kill him for sure. In that nightmare, exhausted, he begs God for protection. For a moment, God's long-ago promise to give him numerous offspring and bless him flashed. Just for a moment.

He took the women, maidservants and children to the other side of the Jabbok, just in case. Then his property. He had done everything, - but still there was restlessness in that loneliness. Then a man appeared. He wrestled with him until exhaustion. It was a struggle for a glimmer of light over doubts, wrong choices, decisions, quests. Since Jacob did not give in, the man struck his hip. Jacob did not give in even then. Aware of the man he was fighting with, he said: "I won't let you go unless you bless me." And the man asked him: "What is your name?" and then gave him a new name: Israel. A new identity. New beginning. A new opportunity. Jacob smiled. He needed that. Then the man blesses him.

He met God face to face and could not remain unchanged. It dawned. The morning of a new day.

# 20

## God Calls Moses

*Exodus 3:1-12*

When God called Moses to go before Pharaoh, in order to bring God's people out of Egypt, Moses asked God: "Who am I that I should go?" Moses understands his weakness. He realizes that he is not ready for such an important and huge undertaking. Then God answers him, "I will be with you." Are there any words that can encourage us more than these? God knows that we as humans are not sufficient. He knows very well all our shortcomings, all that we cannot do and all that we do not have. God knows about all our cares and worries. He knows about every little thing that bothers us. But no matter how unprepared or inadequate we feel for what God is calling us to, if God is with us it completely changes the matter. When God says he will be with us, that is enough. At every moment of our lives, we can be sure that He sympathizes with us and will give us strength when we need it.

That's how our God is. So holy and exalted that even the angels hide their faces before Him, and at the same time so merciful and compassionate towards those who are His. Therefore, let's bring all our worries and all our shortcomings before the Lord, knowing that He guides us and is always with us.

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# 21

## God Reveals His Name

*Exodus 3:13-15*

God speaks to Moses from the burning bush and sends him back to Egypt to lead the people of Israel out of slavery. Moses considers himself completely incapable of this task. He doesn't even know what answer he will give to the Israeli elders when they ask him, "Who is the one who sent you?" Why would they even believe Moses' story in the midst of the hopelessness and oppression they are in, - why would they recognize Moses as a leader?

In response to Moses' questions, doubt and fear, God decides to reveal his true name to Moses for the first time: "I AM WHO I AM ... YAHWEH". I am the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, but more than that, "I AM". I am not the God of your limited past, good and faithful only to your ancestors. There is no time in the past before which I did not exist and no time in the future when I will not exist. I am Yahweh, - present, available, active, and close to those who seek deliverance, forgiveness and guidance. Today you may feel enslaved and oppressed, - you need to give or receive forgiveness, you need to step forward but fear is blocking you, - or perhaps you need fresh vitality, but only exhaustion appears?

God's presence, in Jesus Christ, is realized now, because "Emmanuel - God with us" stands before you!

Jesus says: I am! (John 8:58) Allow God to reveal his name to you anew now!

# 22

## God Reveals His Plan

*Exodus 3:16-20*

“When troubles come He is not far, I know He is watching over me.” The words of this song seem to depict the situation that unfolds in the text before us. God speaks from the burning bush and says that he has seen the miseries of his people in Egypt, he has seen what has been done to them. He will not allow it anymore, he has decided to lead his people out of Egyptian misery. Moses receives a task, God reveals to him what awaits him and lets him know the gravity of the situation, but also shows him the “light at the end of the tunnel”. God says: *“I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by a mighty hand...”* Moses is waiting for a confrontation with Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, but God is with him: *“So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt... after that he will let you go.”* God shows Moses that he is watching over his people. God promises to save his people, - and it was so. Just like the Israelites, we too know how to be enslaved to circumstances and situations in our everyday life. God sees our miseries, whatever they may be, and wants to help us. He wants to save us. God watches over us and speaks to us. Through his word, through brothers and sisters, through circumstances and people in our life. And sometimes, like Moses, he sends us to help someone else. Let’s open our hearts to hear his voice and follow him, whether we ourselves need a way out of some slavery, or someone else needs our help.

# 23

## God Leads the People Out of Egypt

*Exodus 14:15-31*

Although it may sometimes seem otherwise to us, the day when God delivered his people from slavery was not at all romantic or for the faint of heart. On the contrary, it was full of fear, suspense and apprehension, and the Israelites had a decision to make: Would they trust God and continue their journey, even though they themselves did not see a way out of the situation? or would they give up and return to an unpleasant, yet known situation. I don't know about you, but I know that situation well. I often used to pray for changes in my life, but when God has brought me out of difficult situations, it has not always been an excessively pleasant experience, at least for me. It has often required giving up myself, my plans and desires, and the illusion that I had my life under control. Countless times I have cried out to the Lord and asked him: "Why do I have to go through this?" But God continued to ask for my complete commitment to him, as if asking me: "Do you believe me Paula? Do you believe me when I say I love you?" Oh, and how he loves us. He loves us too much to allow us to stay in situations that do us harm, even if we ourselves are afraid and too weak to move. So let's give glory to God and decide to believe. Let's allow him to lead us, no matter how painful the process or how palpable the uncertainty, because we have a God who loves us and always keeps his promises.

# 24

## The Covenant Confirmed

*Exodus 19:1-8; 24*

After all that the Lord has done, delivering the Israelites from Egypt, providing for them an escape through the Red sea, providing for them resources to sustain themselves in the desert, they now arrive at the base of Mount Sinai. God then leads Moses up the mountain to talk about establishing a new covenant. God begins by going through the numerous glimpses of grace that the Israelites have experienced while following Him. Then we can see the serious part of this covenant as God establishes the terms of the covenant. There is one thing that God asks of them, and that is if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. But God does not just talk about obeying, he desires for them to decide to be in a covenant with Him. God provides a way to be communal with Him but there is an ask to action, and that is to make a decision – to obey Him, and follow his commands. Moses then brought all these things that he had heard and told the Israelites all the commands God had given to them. The Israelites now have a decision to make and so do we. In this season of lent, we need to take a step back and remember what God has done in our lives and take a step forward by asking ourselves: Do we want to enter into a covenant with God? Are we prepared, like the people, to respond to His call to a covenant by saying, “We will do everything the Lord has said.”?

*\*To see a practical challenge for today, go to the end of the booklet and find “Practical challenges”, or watch a video on the Baptistička Crkva Zagreb YouTube channel.*

# 25

## God Is Bringing You Into a Good Land

*Deuteronomy 8:1-10*

Just 150 years ago, Mark Twain described Israel as “a desolate land completely given over to weeds, with hardly any trees.” The Negev desert alone makes up more than half of Israel’s total land mass. The dynamism of the restoration of such a landscape begins with the creation of the kibbutz. The clearing of rocky areas for the development of modern agriculture, and extensive reforestation programs have literally changed the face of Israel. The result is that Israel, today, fully produces food for its own needs, and the forested areas are five times larger than those in 1948. In accordance with biblical prophecies, cedars, Aleppo pine, common oak, pine and cypress grow in Israel today. Using drip technology and smart irrigation, the desert is literally blooming with fruit, as prophesied.

Let’s go back 35 centuries! At the end of God’s plan implemented through Moses, (a stubborn man with a shy nature), there is a promise that God “is bringing you into a good land” (Deuteronomy 8:7). The promise stands as a reason-motive to endure and persevere on the way out of the land of slavery into the promised land. The promised land is not some imaginary land but the actual geography of Israel. It is precisely this land that God shows Moses on Mount Nebo. The abundance of water, fruit, and resources of the promised land thus becomes the very picture of God’s presence.

In God’s presence, we can “eat and be full, and bless the Lord our God.”

*\*To see a practical challenge for today, go to the end of the booklet and find “Practical challenges”, or watch a video on the Baptistička Crkva Zagreb YouTube channel.*

# 26

## David Anointed King

*1 Samuel 16:6-13*

As we read the text about David's anointing as king, we witness God's *modus operandi*, which has already been seen many times throughout the history of human salvation. God chooses, and gives His trust and a role in His great story to, someone who by appearance, family status, or some other qualification would most likely not meet our own standards if we were the ones choosing. The prophet Samuel comes to Jesse's house knowing that the next king of Israel is there. The seven likely sons brought before Samuel do not meet God's standards, but yet awaited is the youngest and smallest one. God himself explains his judgment with the words: "*The Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.*" Such is God's surprising intervention in the human evaluation system of that time, according to which the older brother (or brothers) was entitled to a certain right, blessing or God's favor. This was seen earlier in the case of Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau, Joseph, and many times later, when God chooses the exact opposite from what a person would choose. God simply sees something in a certain person that another person doesn't see with his own eyes. Later David did many great things for God's people, but he was far from a perfect man and a perfect king. However, God did not choose him because he was the perfect choice, but because he saw in his heart a value that was not visible on the outside. Despite his imperfection, David found his place in God's great plan of salvation.

# 27

## David Triumphs in the Name of God

*1 Samuel 17:40-50*

This famous event, although it seems like a fairy tale, is true - just like the Napoleonic Wars, just like all other events documented by historians. Every time I am gripped by apprehension and fear when facing an unsolvable situation, I find myself dealing with a dilemma: succumb to fear or kneel before God?! In a world that mocks God with its behavior when attacked, we succumb to the temptation of evil and “respond with the same measure and in the same manner” because this is how our logical mind reacts to an offense. David was justifiably revolted by Goliath’s arrogance. David’s motive for fighting was not to glorify himself, but to glorify the Lord of hosts! Having a righteous motive in his heart, David was pleasing to the Lord. Only such a heart can be used by God to defeat evil. Of course, powerful weapons cannot be compared to pebbles and a slingshot when seen with human eyes. But trust in God and a heart of pure motives activates God’s power and strength, which brings peace and victory.

“Only when I give up, am I immersed in Your will” says one song. God acts and defeats evil attacks. Let us surrender to Him, let us dwell in His presence. God longs for us to surrender our hearts to him anew every day, trusting that He is faithful and just and will not forsake us”. As sons/daughters, let us trust in God, our good father. And all glory and praise belongs to God! David was aware of this, and that’s why he was brave. Let’s imitate him every day anew and victory over trials is certain!

# 28

## God Promises Favor to David

*2 Samuel 7:8-16*

At university and at work, I have had the opportunity to learn what planning is and how to plan. Planning is extremely healthy and important both in business and in life because it helps us set clear goals and concrete steps that we must complete in order to reach an ultimate goal. But also, both privately and in business, I can testify that plans are only a framework, and deviations often occur. Like us, David planned. David's plan was to build a temple to God as an expression of gratitude. He shares his plan with the prophet Nathan, who exhorts and encourages him: "Go, do all that is in your heart, for the Lord is with you." That same night, God "speaks" to the prophet Nathan and changes both his prophetic plan and David's royal plan, showing them that He is sovereign. Instead of building a temple, God reveals his "perfect" plan to David. God will "build/raise up" from David's line a descendant with whom he will have a special relationship. "I shall be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son." A son who will redeem my sins and yours. The son who forever changed history and reconciled man and God.

So, you should plan because it's healthy and important, but include God in your plans. Don't forget that He always has a "bigger" picture than you do. God's plans are always plans of salvation. David was part of that plan. I believe that we are also part of that plan.

# 29

## David's Sin and Repentance

*2 Samuel 12:1-14*

David listens to the story of a rich man who owned many flocks, but when a guest came to him, he did not want to take one of his own animals, but instead he took from a poor man and slaughtered the only sheep that the man had. Without thinking, David condemns him and suggests death. In the next moment, the prophet Nathan confronts him with the fact that this story describes him. What David did was much worse. He killed a man and took his wife. Reading about it, similar thoughts run through my head: "David deserves punishment - he deserves death." However, just as the story of the sheep was told for David, so the story of David was told for me, - in order to face my sins. I'm comforted that I didn't mess up as badly as David, but the Bible is clear - every little sin separates us from God who is perfect. Sin leads to death. It seems depressing, but it has an encouraging ending. Although things could no longer be fixed and the consequences could not be avoided, David was still forgiven. Instead of death he got life.

In Psalm 51, in which David repents for this sin, he prays that God would restore to him the joy of salvation and renew his spirit. It is a wonderful prayer for every believer. Although aware of our sins, we believe in Jesus who is merciful. He came so that all who believe in him may have life and not death. And not just mere survival, but a wonderful life with the Creator. In moments when we don't feel it, we should pray like David: "God, take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation..."

# 30

## The House of David Stands Firm Before God

*2 Samuel 23:1-5*

Often we think about God in a moment of fear or in a cry of helplessness, - yet we know God has cared well for humanity since the beginning of time, in both good times and bad. King David was known as “a man after God’s own heart”, yet his story was filled with difficulties and victories, successes and pains. Many of David’s Psalms were cries to God in difficult situations, but in his last moments on earth, after all the battles and the blessings, David reflects on the true nature of our God: “*He has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure*”. There are no situations surprising to our God. He is not worried about getting everything done or missing out on something important. All things are moving towards His great plan of redemption. The house and line of David is the story of God’s redemption of a single man and God’s greater plan for David’s family, that pointed the way to our savior Jesus. Our God, always in control, always making something from nothing, in the big and the small, always keeping things safe and secure. This is the beauty and the wonder of our God.

# 31

## A Prophetic Word

*Isaiah 11:1-5*

We live in a time of uncertainty, fear, despair, insecurity and all kinds of threats. Nothing new under the sun. God's people were in a very similar situation at the time of the writing of these lines from the book of Isaiah. What could restore hope? What could dispel the fear? What could bring security? How to get rid of anxiety and hopelessness? In his poem "Everyday Lament", the great Croatian poet Tin Ujević, in the wanderings and turmoil of his own spiritual detours, cries out for something that will change his fate: "For I need a mighty word." We are all in an eternal search for peace and security. Isaiah announces a Word of hope, that from something lifeless like a tree stump, a shoot will sprout a sign of life. And that Word is right here in front of us. A Word that awakens hope, A Word that encourages bravery. A Word that offers comfort. For Isaiah, the spirit of the Lord will rest on the promised Messiah. He will have the spirit of wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, knowledge and the fear of the Lord. And that prophetic word was fulfilled in Jesus Christ. We believe in God who comes into our everyday life. We approach God who does not judge us "based on the first impression" of our own achievements or failures, or the "good" recommendations of our neighbors. We believe in God who still speaks to us today through his Word.

Have you experienced the power of His Word that changes not only our current mood, but also our eternity? Do not give up, because from something lifeless new hope is born, because God does not give up on his promises.

*\*To see a practical challenge for today, go to the end of the booklet and find "Practical challenges", or watch a video on the Baptistička Crkva Zagreb YouTube channel.*

# 32

## The Word Became Flesh

*John 1:9-18*

What does God, who is perfect, holy, just, almighty and seemingly so far away, have to do with my reality today and this suffering-soaked world?

As we approach Easter, we may be thinking about questions like *why did Jesus have to die like that, or how is it possible that he was resurrected?* However, in order to talk about the crucified and then resurrected Christ, we must first mention his arrival. This is where the question, *where did Jesus come from and anyway why?* can help us.

God cares that we know this, so Jesus gave us the answers to these questions (John 6:38-39). But then we come to *the way* he came. For God, who is almighty, it is somehow appropriate that he resurrected Jesus. But my amazement, - and in some ways a greater miracle, - has always been the fact that the perfect God left perfection and came to an imperfect, sinful world and became like us. This is what today's text tells us: *The Word became flesh*, the true Light, the holy God became incarnate and granted that we see his majesty in Jesus of Nazareth.

God cares that we also know why (John 3:16). Therefore, the answer to the question that we started with is: He has so very much to do with it! God became man and lived in the same suffering-filled world with us in order to bring salvation, and to show that Jesus is the only Way to the place from which He came.

# 33

## The Bread of life

*John 6:35*

God came to us in Jesus Christ, became incarnate. Out of love for us, God became a man like us. As such, close to people, Jesus presents himself to us: "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst." He is the bread that gives life. Not just this earthly life, but eternal life. "And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." (John 17:3) What does bread actually mean to you? Something good, essential food - it is hard to imagine how we can live without bread. We need bread every day. When you meet Jesus, you have something good and essential in life. With Him, life is practical and uncomplicated. You trust Him, you walk with Him day by day, you thank Him. It's a fulfilled life, no hunger or thirst for anything else. We are no longer looking for "Bread and circuses!" like the ancient Romans - an easy life. For the New Year, we kept hearing that people want health the most. "Only health - nothing else!" And what then when health fails? What remains important and essential is the bread that gives life: Jesus! "Give us this day our daily bread!" (Mt 6:11) How many times a day do you remember and call on Jesus? For real, - not with some superficial phrase, but whispering or saying loudly: "Jesus, help me!" or "Jesus thank you!"

Jesus is close to you... Be aware of that.

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# 34

## The Light of the World

*John 8:12*

Before I was born again, there was a lot of darkness in my life. I used to hate people and there was so much anger in me. I had a boxing bag and I often used it until my knuckles would bleed. When I decided to follow God He took all of that away. It surprised me that I can feel love for people I don't even know; that I might feel the need to pray for those who are not my friends. It is all because God showed me people in a different light. He showed me how He sees them. Through Him we are born again and we can see the world in His light. It puts everything in a different perspective. This light, however, reveals more than just things around us. It shines on our lives and shows us what needs to be cleaned. And as soon as we are done cleaning, the light intensifies, which allows us to see what else should be changed so that we can grow closer to Him.

If we choose to follow Him, if we continue on the path that he prepared for us, we won't walk in darkness.

# 35

## The Door

*John 10: 9-10*

He lies, undermines and steals! Yes, that is his job and intention, to destroy and even kill. Everything he tells is a lie - that is sometimes wrapped in a beautiful decorative package. What is saddest is the fact that he often succeeds. Here's how: Before the foundation of the world, God had a perfect plan of salvation for ALL people. But with man's fall into sin, the enemy is using every possible arsenal of weapons to deceive us. You believed that Jesus Christ is the only savior and the only door to heaven, which is true. Why then do you believe Satan, who shoves all your sins under your nose, even those that have been forgiven by the Lord, when you surrendered your life to Him and repented?!? God's word is full of promises, and God who is sovereign does not give up on them. Personally, I say with certainty: not all roads lead to heaven. You know that too, right? Then why do you try to redeem yourself with good deeds? This is another one of the traps set in our path. If you enter that sole, narrow door of grace and love, you will be able to go in and out, and nourish yourself without ceasing on the spiritual food that is offered to you in abundance.

This door gives freedom, peace and a heart full of joy. So come in, the entrance is paid!

# 36

## The Good Shepherd

*John 10:11-14*

Going out to graze presents sheep with a daily possibility of being attacked by a predator such as a wolf. That is why the sheep need the protection of the shepherd. His presence and voice which they know. In this text, Jesus calls himself the good shepherd. The good shepherd calls each sheep by name. He gave his life for each one. He cares about each individual sheep. He protects his own sheep, and is ready to take care of sheep from other sheepfolds. The one who is not a shepherd, but only a hired hand, does not invest effort in getting to know or really understanding the sheep, - and in the event of a wolf attack, he only looks to save his own skin. For him, the sheep are not in the first place, but rather his own well-being. Jesus is the good shepherd. We are his sheep. How well do we know Jesus's voice? In the cacophony of voices, can we recognize the voice of the One who knows us, calls us by name and has given His life for us? Do we perhaps prefer the voices of those who do not enter the sheepfold through the door, but from the side? Who are we fighting against - "wolves" that catch up with us throughout life and sometimes it seems that there is no end to them?

Jesus offers a way out, he is the good shepherd who gives life to his sheep and not just any life, but life in abundance. Why is it so difficult for us to surrender to him and live such a life?

*\*To see a practical challenge for today, go to the end of the booklet and find "Practical challenges", or watch a video on the Baptistička Crkva Zagreb YouTube channel.*

# 37

## Resurrection and Life

*John 11:25-27*

In John 11 we see contrasting themes—in the midst of death, Jesus offers life. Now, two thousand years after Jesus said these words, his life-giving resurrection continues to transform lives.

Though I have never turned away from the crucially important decision of turning over my life to Him, I often overlook, or even neglect, the reality of resurrection power in my everyday life. When facing difficulties at work, I frequently rely on my own ideas and resources instead of relying on prayer and God's power. When we see unjust practices and actions around us, we can get discouraged and doubt God's life-giving power to make a difference. Sometimes struggling with relationships or financial difficulties can cause us to lose a sense of hope. It's easy to forget that Jesus is the resurrection and the life when we face hardships, experience setbacks, or even when we receive unexpected constructive criticism.

As we approach Easter, please remember the power of Christ in you. Considering your own spiritual journey, thank God for the new life He has brought you, and His continued answers to prayer. Think about the resurrection life He may want to reveal to you in a current challenging situation. Jesus' promise of resurrection life was not meant just for our future bodily resurrection, but for all the broken elements in our daily lives that need his powerful healing touch.

# 38

## The Way, the Truth and the Life

*John 14:5-11*

***The way, the truth and the life***, are the familiar words of the biblical text in front of us, about which I have not thought deeply until now. What does Jesus tell the disciples, and what can we learn from it today? After Jesus has told them that he is only with them for a short time, that he is leaving and that they know the way he is going, Thomas answers with the question: “We don’t know where you are going, how can we know the way?” Today we can say that the answer is simple and we can wonder how they didn’t know it, but let’s try to put ourselves in their situation - what were their expectations, and what sort of questions did they have?

Jesus answers that He is the way, the truth and the life, and that there is no other way to the Father except through Him. The way is a picture of a life of righteousness and wisdom. Jesus is not only an example of such a life, but it is Jesus who, through his death and resurrection, made access to the Father possible and paved the way, - no one else could have done that. Jesus is not only the one who teaches the way, He is the way to the Father because he fully reveals to us the truth about the Father - the Father’s character.

Are we perhaps like Philip who just wants someone to show him the Father?!? As to the disciples then, so to us today, Jesus is the one who has shown the Father completely. We can be firmly grounded in the truth that the Holy Scriptures tell us, and we can know our Heavenly Father.

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# 39

## The True Vine

*John 15:1-4*

Reading these lines of John's Gospel, the images brought me back to a period of my childhood. Namely, my family owned a vineyard and often in the spring I watched my dad skilfully and expertly clean the vines, pruning the excess canes and shoots of the overgrown vines. At the time, I did not understand the purpose of that work and it was sad to see the rows of bare vines. But like any child, I trusted my dad.

And he, a good vinedresser, did it for the ultimate benefit of the crop. He knew that only those young shoots connected to the vine bear fruit because they draw everything necessary for development from it. During the following months, he toured the vineyard and occasionally repeated the same action, until autumn. And in autumn, our vineyard turned golden with large and juicy grapes. Oh, how proud I was of my dad while I was amazed by what I saw, running from picker to picker who were filling baskets with fragrant fruits. It was the successful result of love and work.

The Heavenly Father, the Vinedresser, has given us the Vine of Life: Jesus, - onto which, grafted and in synergy with him, we bring a good harvest into this world. He invites us to abide in him. If not, all our efforts are in vain. We pray that we will be fruitful because that is how people will recognize us and see the works done in the love of Christ.

# 40

## Jesus Has Overcome

*John 16:29-33*

The one who was promised as a savior, foreshadowed as far back as the time of Moses and the prophets, faithfully awaited by all the tired, burdened, exhausted and helpless: Jesus, who through many conversations, repeatedly presents himself with those burning words of divine identity "I am". The Bread of Life, the Light of the World, the Door, the Good Shepherd, the Resurrection, the Way, the Truth and the Life, the True Vine - all those realities that his disciples learned to recognize experientially in their Master. The one with whom they have a deep relationship, in whose footsteps they followed, with whom they broke bread. The one they listened to speak with an authority never seen before, who performed miracles right before their eyes, raising the sick and freeing the oppressed. He now tells his disciples that the moment is coming when the Master must leave, just as he often used to say in his parables. The Master is leaving for a while, but the Master will return. It will be a time of fear, uncertainty, struggle and trial. It will be a time of suffering in this world - hearts will still ache, tears will still flow, the body will still decay, illness will grieve and death will take without question. But sorrow will turn to joy because He will wipe away every tear. There will be no more mourning, crying, or pain for the old order of things will have passed away. Let's take heart, brothers and sisters, because at the end there is one more of His "I am"s - He is the one who has overcome!

*\*To see a practical challenge for today, go to the end of the booklet and find "Practical challenges", or watch a video on the [Baptistička Crkva Zagreb YouTube channel](#).*



## **FOLLOWING THE TRAIL OF GOD'S PROMISES**

For the past 40 days, we have read biblical texts, and the personal reflections of people that these texts inspired. We were additionally challenged to take some practical steps. We followed the trail of God's great promises from the beginning of time through which, step by step, the history of salvation has been revealed, and which reached its culmination in the person of Jesus Christ. Yes, that's the peak, but that's not the end of this Story! The New Testament is full of reports of people whose lives were changed because of a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, because of an encounter with His saving work, because of an encounter with His life-giving word. And even that is not the end! This extraordinary Story continues throughout history until and including our time. This extraordinary Story can continue throughout our lives as well.

In the coming days, as we reflect on Jesus' suffering, death and triumphant Resurrection throughout Holy Week, let us be aware, more than ever before, that we are part of a Great Story, God's Story. Our personal salvation is part of the plan of salvation for mankind. We are partakers of God's

great promises through Jesus Christ, who brings healing and peace:

***“He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.”***  
Isaiah 53:5

Let's continue to tell that Story with our words and with our lives.

## **Continue the Story**

Tell someone your story about how meeting Jesus changed your life. Keep talking!

Or...

Maybe you don't feel like a part of this Great Story, maybe you don't have the experience of a personal encounter with Jesus yet. Take courage and tell Jesus in your own words exactly how you feel about it. Dare to talk to someone about it, maybe it can be one of us from Challenge 40.



## PRACTICAL CHALLENGES

### **Day 2.**

How can you be a better person? Perhaps a better question is - do you know yourself well enough to be able to identify your weaknesses? We challenge you today to take some of the well-known personality tests (Mayers-Briggs, DISC...) and get to know yourself a little better. And then write down which are the weaknesses you can work on?

### **Day 7.**

What do you think about the God of the "Old Testament" today? The easiest way to answer this question is to take 30 seconds of your time and write down all the associations that come to your mind when you hear the phrase 'The God of the Old Testament'. When you see what you've written, allow the Holy Spirit to show you if there is anything you're not seeing, - are there any lies, or false images?

### **Day 9.**

How can you concretely do at least one thing today that will contribute to ecological betterment and not destruction? Can you buy reusable shopping bags, do something in your own home or dare to take a bigger step that will contribute to the preservation and betterment of everything that surrounds us?

### **Day 11.**

Think about writing a prayer journal! If writing is not your thing, maybe a prayer app, a prayer walk or a prayer partner is the solution! Whatever it is, may you experience revival in your prayer life.

### **Day 16.**

Turn your disobedience into obedience! Identify the temptations and trials that make it difficult for you to be obedient to God. What's it all about for you, how or where are you disobedient to God? Read Psalm 51 and come before the Lord with a prayer to become a person after His heart.

### **Day 20.**

The power of invitation, of a call: Jesus invites you to put all your worries in his hands, to come to him if you are tired and burdened. Answer Jesus's invitation! Write down all your worries, problems and challenges. Bring them in prayer before the One who calls you to him and wait. And now, what else is your God inviting you to, calling you to do? - You, who in your own mind are an insecure, unprepared and weak person? God can, and even more He wants to use you for something that others may not be able to do. What is God calling you to do?

### **Day 24.**

Create your own "Miracles Journal". Make a list of all the situations when the Lord has answered your prayers, when he has blessed you in some way. Describe every occasion when you've seen God at work as a testimony. Write down God's miracles in your life, starting with the one when he saved you. It is easy to praise God and be obedient when circumstances are in our favor. But what about when we find ourselves in the desert, and are about to start grumbling? Then open your "Miracles Journal".

### **Day 25.**

God did not intend for only Israel to enjoy a good land. The good land today is not just for you and me. Who can you point in the direction of the good land? A family from the building where you live, a neighbor from the street, a student at university, or a colleague from work? Who is in need - and can you point him to, - even lead him to the good land?

### **Day 31.**

A prophetic word was most clearly revealed to us more than 2000 years ago. Today it is available to us in the Holy Scriptures. Get informed today and learn something new about the Bible, maybe three new things that you didn't know until now. Think you know enough? Tell someone what you are most amazed by in the Bible. In fact, why not give a Bible to someone who doesn't have one yet?

### **Day 33.**

Today's challenge for you is to list the occasions in your life where you resort to looking for and choosing fast food instead of the eternal bread of life. What are the easy victories, quick and short-term solutions, and apparent pearls whose shine is fake that you choose instead of what is right, what is good, what is eternal?

### **Day 36.**

It is difficult to hear the voice of our shepherd if we do not listen. Try to focus your attention on listening today: spend at least 15 minutes in complete silence, alone! Or, if it's still too difficult, put headphones in your ears and write "white noise" on YouTube. Focus your thoughts on Jesus and listen.

**Day 38.**

How can you know that Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life? Maybe someone told you. If this is your reality, the challenge for you is to respond to someone else's "Show us the Father". Tell someone why you choose Jesus as your Way every day, how he is your Truth and when you received Life as a gift!

**Day 40.**

The text talks about a future that is different from our reality today. Read one of the scriptures that talk about that victory and what it will look like (eg Revelation 7: 9-12). Think about that image and be encouraged! Share this with someone whose view may be currently stuck in the past, or to whom this reality that awaits us in the future seems unattainable.



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9. Johann David Go - A Covenant Established
10. Filip Grujić - David Anointed King; Jesus Has Overcome
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38. Ivona Vuk - Noah as a Shining Example
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