

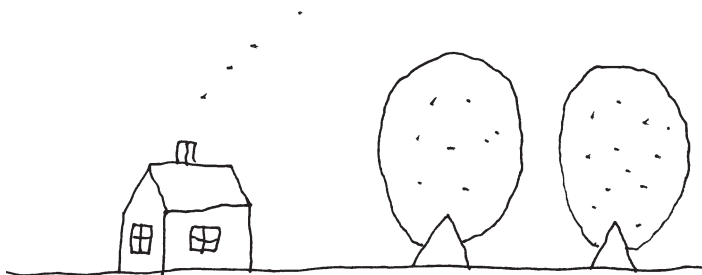


*Finding God in a
Tangled World*





OPEN





Finding God in a Tangled World

Thoughts & Parables



Juris Rubenis
&
Maris Subacs

Translated from the original Latvian by Paul Valliere

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Introduction

Juris Rubenis and Maris Subacs are fresh Christian voices from a little known corner of Europe. Juris is the pastor of Martin Luther Church in Riga, Latvia. Maris is a well known graphic artist in the same city. For more than ten years Juris and Maris have been partners in a unique sort of spiritual conversation, producing more than a dozen collections of meditations, thoughts, and parables. Resembling poetry more than prose and rendered unmistakable by Maris's line drawings, these little books are loved by people of all faiths in Latvia.

Why should North Americans listen to voices from Latvia, a small, relatively poor country on the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea adjacent to Russia? The answer is that, while Latvia might be a small country, it has a big story to tell. For fifty years Latvia was part of the Soviet Union. Regaining its independence in 1991, the country has worked hard to remake itself as a democracy, and in 2004 it was admitted to the European Union. Latvia is thus a window on the vast spiritual drama of the Soviet and post-Soviet world—the drama of atheism and religious persecution, of Communism and its collapse, of spiritual rebirth, of the struggle for human rights, political freedom, and a United States of Europe, and yes, of post-Soviet materialism and reckless globalization.





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Juris Rubenis came to the Christian faith as a young adult in Soviet Latvia when atheism was still the state religion. Inspired by a courageous pastor, the Rev. Roberts Feldmanis, Juris was ordained to the Lutheran ministry in 1982 at the age of twenty-one. Maris Subacs, a 1988 graduate of the Latvian Academy of Art, also converted to Christianity as a young man, making a leap of faith that carried him to Roman Catholicism from the turbulent “bohemia” he inhabited as a popular young artist in Riga.

Juris achieved national prominence early in his ministry. In 1986 he took an active role in Helsinki-86, the first above-ground human rights organization in Soviet Latvia, and in the following year he helped found Rebirth and Renewal, an association of Latvian Lutheran pastors calling for religious freedom in the Soviet Union. By this time Mikhail Gorbachev was in power in Moscow. The three Baltic republics of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia responded enthusiastically to Gorbachev’s reforms, but they also made it clear that they were interested in nothing less than complete independence from the Soviet Union. In 1988, independence-minded Popular Front movements were launched in all three Baltic countries. Juris was one of the founders of the Latvian Popular Front.

The next three years were an exhilarating time for the Baltic peoples—a time of mass meetings, inspired journalism, impassioned choral festivals, charismatic oratory, the return of prisoners and exiles, and the





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recovery of national pride. With his moral clarity and golden tongue, Juris contributed mightily to the “singing revolution” that swept his native land to freedom.

After the restoration of Latvian independence, a political career lay open to Juris. But after a time of wrestling, he decided his vocation lay not in the state but in the church, the place where he discovered the spiritual freedom that grounds all other freedoms. Under his leadership Martin Luther Church has become the largest church in Latvia and one of the most dynamic congregations anywhere in Europe.

As teachers, Rubenis and Subacs focus on elementary spiritual truths. This makes sense in a post-Communist environment where many people have only recently been exposed to religion. But it is also salutary for more experienced audiences. Like all good theologians, our authors know that the elementary truths about God and the world are also the most important. There is something primal about faith, something that bears repeating over and over again. When we listen, we discover new things in a message we thought we knew very well.

Juris’s and Maris’s teaching tools are thoughts and parables—pithy observations about the world and brief, deceptively simple stories bearing a moral or spiritual lesson. In biblical perspective the two forms are one and the same. Both are included in the Hebrew word *mashal*, a term sometimes translated “proverb,” at other times “parable.” The point of a mashal in either form is to precipitate a moment of insight into the difference





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between wisdom and folly, evil and good, falsehood and truth, time and eternity, human beings and God. Jesus was master of the mashal in both its forms.

The mashal teaches us to practice humility in theology. Our authors repeatedly stress the impossibility of capturing theological truths in any sort of system, even a system of church dogma crafted by the most saintly teachers in the world. God is just too big, Jesus too paradoxical. The mashal, attuned more to paradox and symbol than to propositions, is the perfect medium for theological conversation. It is a means of dialogue with the divine that does not let us forget that God is the Ineffable One.

Maris's drawings convey the same message. His people are small, awkward, and obviously incapable of accomplishing great things on their own, yet they are neither hopeless nor helpless. They stand at all times before a gracious presence that empowers them to do what they could not do by themselves, such as getting their bearings in the cosmos, loving their neighbors, building decent communities, and facing death with hope.

As a churchman, Rubenis stands somewhat outside the mainstream of contemporary Eastern European Christianity. The mainstream is religious traditionalism, with a strong emphasis on the authority of the institutional church. This traditionalism cuts across denominational lines and is as powerful in Protestant churches as it is in the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches in the region. This should come as no surprise, given that the challenge





Introduction

facing Eastern European religious communities today is to rebuild themselves after the ravages of the Communist period. Religious traditionalism is also attractive because it provides a clear alternative to the materialism and moral nihilism of the post-Communist era. But Juris takes a different approach. His preaching of the Gospel is gentler, more humane, and more tolerant of diversity than the message conveyed by many churches in his part of the world.

Juris's collaboration with a Roman Catholic artist is a further expression of independence. Such ecumenism also reflects the culture of Latvia, which has always been an ethnic and religious crossroads. About a third of the population of Latvia is not Latvian at all, but Russian. In the past a large German population played a leading role in the country, leaving a legacy that is still felt in countless ways. The religious geography of Latvia is likewise complex, with Protestant, Catholic, and Russian Orthodox communities flourishing in roughly equal numbers. Historically Latvia has also been a haven for persecuted or marginalized religious minorities, such as Jews, Moravians, and Russian Orthodox Old Believers. With their respect for diversity and love of dialogue, Rubenis and Subacs honor both the past and the promise of Latvian pluralism.

The Gospel according to Rubenis and Subacs is all about discovering God's grace in unexpected places. For North Americans, Latvia can be one of those places. Juris and Maris know very well that their country is





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inconspicuous on the global scene. But they also know that the spiritual world is a world of reverse perspective, where a small people can be gifted with a big faith and a narrow gate can open onto a vast and wonderful domain. This basic truth cannot be repeated too often in North America, where we tend to be self-absorbed and dangerously unaware of our limits. We would do well to listen to voices from small countries. “Latvia has a prophet’s budget—that is to say, a small one,” say Rubenis and Subacs, with a smile at the limited resources of their country. This observation applies also to their books. With modesty and good humor, pastor and artist have done nothing less than the work of prophets. They have borne witness to the mystery of Eden, the mystery of the kingdom of God.

Paul Valliere





Introduction

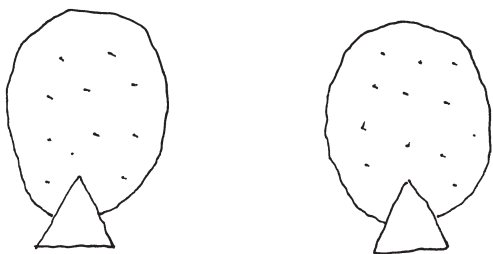
Translator's Note

The material in this book is drawn from ten separate works by Juris Rubenis and Maris Subacs published in Riga between 1997 and 2006. The selection and arrangement, including the chapter divisions, are the work of the translator in consultation with Juris Rubenis. All translations were made from the original Latvian.

A bibliography of the Latvian sources including page references is available from the translator, Dr. Paul Valliere, McGregor Professor in the Humanities, Butler University, Indianapolis, Indiana 46208 (pvallier@butler.edu).

The translator expresses deep thanks to Juris Rubenis for our twenty years of friendship, to Maris Subacs for preparing original English-language versions of the drawings, and to Karl Rusa of the Irwin Library of Butler University for his invaluable advice on issues of Latvian-English translation.





THE GARDEN
WHERE WE WALK
WITH GOD





1

Eden

One day Adam asked God, “Why am I here?”
“So that I can enjoy your company, and you mine,” God replied.

Adam asked, “What can I do to make my joy and yours as great as possible?”

“Just be what I have made you,” God said.

Adam replied, “I have heard that the angels think I am disobedient and unholy.”

“The angels do not have the feelings for me that you have,” God said.

“But I want to be like the angels,” Adam said.

“You can’t be, you are a human being,” God replied.

“The angels seem to know something you do not tell me,” Adam said.

“But you understand something the angels do not understand,” God explained.

“What is that?” Adam asked.

“What is going on between us when we speak about these things,” God replied.



In the beginning we took pleasure in great truths;
trivialities came later.





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Once there was stillness. It was so profound you could hear God's still and peaceful voice.



Adam said to God, "There is some sort of mystery here in Eden."

"I made it like this so that you can think about Eden forever," God said with a smile.



The truth you deal with must be bigger than you so that you can think about it forever.



In Eden an angel said, "Everything is illusory until you know God."

"Explain that!" the other angels demanded.

"God is the only reason your dreams exist, but God is not a dream. God is who God is."



God created the world.

"Why did you do it?" an angel asked.

"To give you something to think about," God replied.



Once upon a time God created an angel who liked doing the tasks God gave him but who was not a particularly





Eden

good worker. All the same, God gave him the more important assignments.

“Why didn’t you choose a more exemplary worker?” the other angels asked.

“Because this angel cannot live without contact with me,” God replied.



In Eden an angel said, “In God there is infinite beauty.” All agreed, and for a long time they contemplated God.



There was once a world that came to be called the Garden of Eden. The angels lived there. They were all happy.

“There could not be a better world than this one!” they agreed.

God was silent.

“What do you think of our world?” the angels asked.

“I think it will go bad,” God said.

“Why?” the angels asked in surprise.

“Because you will not forgive me if I create something else.”

“Why do you need to create something else?”

“Because we want all sorts of things to exist,” God replied.





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God was thinking: “What is to be done? The angel Satan understands us but does not love us. Let us make a new creature who will be able to understand us and love us.” So God spoke and created Adam.



In Eden an angel said, “Adam does not appreciate the grandeur of God but talks with God as if God were Adam.”



“I’m chummy with God,” Adam announced to the angels one day.

“But God is God!” the angels objected in alarm.

“God seems lonely to me,” Adam continued. “God wants someone to be friends with.”



In Eden an angel said, “Adam is not an ordinary angel.”

“He behaves strangely,” the others agreed.

“There is supposed to be something of God in him—that’s what the Almighty has been heard to say.”

“That’s funny,” the others said. “Adam behaves like a bad angel. He wants to make all his own decisions. Let some good angel have a talk with him.”

“Adam, be good!” the holiest angel urged him.

“You mean, I’m not good?” Adam was surprised.

The angel was silent for a moment. “Maybe I shouldn’t have said that,” he thought.





Eden

“Of course you are good,” he said, “but just try to be more obedient.”



In Eden an angel said, “Adam is not as inferior as we think.” “What are you saying? Adam is Adam!” the other angels objected, and laughed. “You’d better not laugh at God!” the angel warned them.



In Eden an angel said, “God loves Adam more than the rest of us because he is not afraid of God.”



In Eden one day Adam gathered the angels around him and began explaining what God is like. A respected angel went to see God and asked, “Who is this fellow? Is he a genius or an imposter?” “He is a creature who has discovered something of God within himself,” God explained calmly. “He really does understand something, but of course he is only a creature.”



Adam was listening to rock music and tapping his foot. “What are you doing?” the angels asked. “I am enjoying myself,” Adam said, continuing to keep time. “What a fool!” the angels concluded. “Oh, you angels!” Adam replied, keeping up the beat.





Finding God in a Tangled World



In Eden an angel said, “The point of the creation of the world is a mystery to us. Only to Adam is it self-evident that he needs a world of his own.”



In Eden an angel said, “Adam needs a world of his own because here among us he always feels he is bad.”



In Eden an angel said, “Eden will not last forever.”
“How can that be?” the others said in alarm.
“We treat Adam badly,” the angel replied.
“But Adam is not good!” said the others in surprise.
“There is something of God in him,” replied the angel.



Adam was at it again. He was pulling the angels by the wings, and they were indignant.
“I want to study you,” Adam explained.
“Shameless!” the angels bristled.
“They’re calling me names,” Adam complained to God.
“Stop whining,” God said. “I’ll make you another world.”
“And what will it be like there?” Adam asked.
“There you will be able to investigate to your heart’s content how everything is put together.”
“But how are you put together?” Adam suddenly asked.
“That’s rather complicated,” God said with a smile.





Eden



In Eden an angel said, "There are times when Adam wants to be God. He cannot be, so he gets morose."



In Eden an angel said, "Adam wants everyone to treat him like God. If they do not, he becomes unhappy."



Even Adam went to church once a week.



One day Adam said to God, "I need another Adam here in Eden."

"You are wrong," God said. "You need Eve."

"Who is Eve?" Adam asked.

"Someone a little like Adam," God replied.



One day God asked Adam, "Why don't you make friends with any of the animals I have made for you?"

Adam replied, "They do not understand me."

"I understand you," God said, "but you don't want to tell me everything."

"You are so much bigger and stronger than I am," Adam said. "I want someone like myself."

"You will not find anybody who understands you as well as I do," God said to Adam.





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“I feel lonely,” Adam replied. “I am not God. We’re just different.”

“We are also a bit like each other,” God replied.

“I enjoy feeling like God among the animals,” Adam said, “but in your presence I feel like one of them.”

“I do not know what to say to you,” God said. “So I will make another creature like you.”

And God created Eve.



One day Adam said to Eve, “I like you!”

“I like you, too,” Eve replied.

God laughed and said, “This work of mine has turned out well!”



Adam said to God, “I like Eve very much. I would like a second Eve.”

God replied to Adam, “Try to understand the Eve you already have and you won’t need another one.”



One day Adam said to God, “I want to be like you.”

“You already are a bit like me,” God said. “You are my image.”

“I want to be like the holiest angel.”

“Your wish is admirable, but what you really need is Eve,” God comforted him.





Eden

“It is only you I want,” Adam said.

“You can see me through Eve,” God replied.



Adam was hiding from God in the bushes.

“Why have you run away from me?” God asked.

“I have made a terrible discovery. Eve is my real love, not you,” Adam said in tears.

God calmed him down. “Don’t worry—in Eve, too, there is something of me.”



One day Adam said to God: “I want to be like you.”

“That’s not possible,” God replied, “although there’s nothing bad about your dream.”



One day Adam asked God: “What will I be like when you finish making me?”

“Like me,” God replied.

“Is that possible?” Adam asked in surprise.

“In one respect, yes, though not in all respects.”



In Eden there were many kinds of trees. In the middle grew the tree of life. “Give me something from that tree,” Adam asked God.

“You have to wait,” God replied. “Every tree has its season.”





Finding God in a Tangled World



One day Jesus asked his Father, “Why do people say that the forbidden fruit is sweet?”

God replied, “The forbidden fruit has no taste at all. It is neither sweet nor bitter.”

“Then why do people want it?” Jesus asked.

“Because they have foolish ideas about Eden,” God replied. “They think that disobedience is sweet. But disobedience is utterly tasteless.”



In the Garden of Eden there was more than the forbidden fruit.



One angel asked another, “Why does God only walk in the Garden of Eden, not live in it?”

“Because everyone here feels small compared to God,” the other angel answered.



The garden of paradise was a place where from time to time Adam could hide from God.



One day Adam said to God, “I am so full of faults. I need someone who can put up with me. I am glad you are like that.”

“Oh, my Adam!” God said. “I don’t put up with you. I love you.”





Eden



In Eden an angel said, “The world wants to be wise, but God likes naiveté.”

“Explain that!” the other angels asked.

“The world is afraid of being small. It seeks refuge in the illusion of wisdom.”



One day Adam asked God, “Why am I so small?”

“Because I am so big,” God replied.



One day Adam was looking at the heavens.

“They are so big and wide,” he said to God.

“I am the heavens,” God replied.

“Don’t try to fool me—you are God!” Adam objected.

God breathed a sigh of relief. “Ah, Adam, Adam, you are my beloved child!”



One day Adam asked God, “Why don’t you pay me a wage for all the gardening I do here?”

“This is paradise,” God said. “Your wages are the beauty you receive from me free of charge.”



God loves human beings; the angels do not.





Finding God in a Tangled World



God loves the angels, but there is something they do not quite understand. God loves human beings, but they are wayward.



“How are you?” God asked Adam in Eden one day. “I’m fine,” Adam replied. “But it’s awfully quiet around here.”

“That is because in me there is peace,” God said.

“Satan says that an angel’s life is much more interesting. There is always something going on, all sorts of conflicts and wars. What is war?”

“Do not talk with that angel,” God rebuked Adam. “He does not wish you well. To be happy, an angel needs one thing, you need something else.”



To an angel a foe is a friend.



Human beings, living in the body, can only believe that God exists; the angels can see it.



Theological disputes are quarrels of angels.



Angels are the holiest of God’s creatures, but even they have a dark side. Angels err, God does not.





Eden



Human beings are not holy the way the angels are, but they are wiser because they bear the image of God.



Angels love human beings when human beings are powerless. They save human beings when human beings are powerful.



Angels reach paradise by way of obedience, human beings by way of freedom—a freedom that has accepted obedience.



Adam complained to God, “The angels are saying bad things about me.”

“About me, too,” God comforted him.



In Eden an angel said, “It is not possible to defeat God.”

“That is not quite right,” God said.

“Why not?” the others asked, bewildered.

“God can retreat in certain situations,” God explained.

“We do not understand,” the angels said.

“For example, God can refrain from destroying you for expressing dangerous ideas.”





Finding God in a Tangled World



In Eden an angel said, “It’s all Adam’s fault. It was for him that an imperfect world was created.”
“It’s actually your fault,” God replied. “You did not accept Adam into your world.”



An angel said, “Adam’s weak in the head.”
“By your logic, so am I,” God replied.



In Eden an angel said, “God does not like ruling.”
“Explain that!” the others demanded.
“God likes it when creatures are what they are.”
“Then why is God always demanding obedience from us?”
“He is teaching us to be,” the angel replied.



An angel asked God, “Why do you pay so much attention to Adam?”
“He is my friend,” God replied.
“Does he say wiser things than the rest of us?” the angel asked.
“No,” God said. “But he tells me more about the everyday problems of creation than any other creature does.”



Paradise comes to an end with the thought “I am not good.”





Eden



One day Jesus asked his Father, “Abba, why did you punish Adam?”

“I did not punish him,” God replied. “I created a world for him so that he could find his way back to freedom.”



One day Eve said to Adam, “You make me feel righteous, even though I am not.”

“I think you are righteous,” Adam replied.

“It is the angels who are righteous,” Eve said. “To be perfectly honest, I am not.”

“Well, since I am like you, I must not be righteous, either,” Adam said, and he grew sad.

“The best of the angels is Satan,” Adam continued, “but for some reason God has forbidden us to talk with him.”

“I like him,” Eve said. “He is very holy.”

“I, too, want to be holy,” Adam observed, and he felt even sadder.

“Let’s ask Satan how we can be holy,” Eve said.

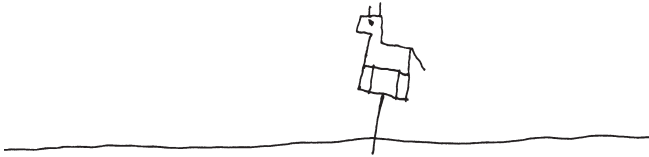
“You cannot be holy,” Satan said. “You are made from the dust of the earth.”

“Are we really dust?” Adam and Eve asked God.

God was silent, knowing it was so.

Finally God said, “You will have to live in another world, where angels do not talk and where everyone is just like you.”





THE GOLDEN CALF
AND THE HEAVENS





2

The Bible

There was once a certain Pharisee. He was not especially meticulous, but he revered the Law of Moses, so the other Pharisees respected him. One day a prostitute approached him.

“Does God love us?” she asked.

“God loves all people,” the Pharisee answered.

“Then why did he throw Adam out of paradise?” the woman asked.

“Where is that written?” the Pharisee asked.

“That’s what people say,” the woman replied.

“It is written: ‘But the Lord God called to the man, Where are you?’” the old Pharisee replied quietly.

“Then it must be Eve that God does not like,” the woman said. “She is blamed for everything.”

“Where is that written?” the Pharisee asked quietly.

“That’s what people say.”

“It is written: ‘This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh,’” the old Pharisee explained quietly.

“And people say there’s a horrible snake in paradise,” the woman said.

“It is written that it is very beautiful there,” the Pharisee explained quietly.





Finding God in a Tangled World



God created a book of stories about God and humanity. “Why is it so long and hard to understand?” someone asked. “So that people will not think they know all there is to know about God,” God replied.



The knowledge of God begins and ends with idols. In between there is the Bible.



Idolatry is the illusion that you can understand God.



Someone asked God, “What is the Bible?”
God replied, “The Bible is a book we have made out of our life together with human beings and human beings’ life together with us.”



The Bible is about real life, not dreams. So the people in it are fallible.



The world of the Bible is our world.



There was a Bible reader who found answers to some of his questions but not to others.





The Bible

“Why isn’t everything written in the Bible?” he asked God. “So that you don’t lose the need for the living God,” God replied.



Someone asked, “Are all of God’s words in the Bible?” “All of God’s words cannot be in the Bible,” God answered. “That would mean that God is dead. But there are enough of God’s words in the Bible for people to know how to live by them.”



A disciple asked Jesus, “How should we regard the Bible? Is it finished?”

Jesus answered, “You should regard the Bible as a God-given book that lets you make judgments about the nature of God. The Bible is not finished because not everything is written in it. The Bible is also finished because not everything is written in it.”



There was a person who really wanted to understand the Bible, but he was not doing very well.

“Try to understand just two stories,” God told him, “the story of Adam and the story of Jesus. In every Old Testament story you can see Adam, and every New Testament story is about Jesus and one of his disciples.”





Finding God in a Tangled World



Once upon a time people decided to build a tower reaching to heaven.

They were all of one mind. “We will show God what we can do. We will have the tallest tower in the world.”

“I love the people with the smallest tower in the world, too,” God said, and he confused their language.



The trouble with the tower of Babel was not that it was too close to God but that it was too far removed from the earth.



Abraham was just an obedient pagan. God chose him because of his obedience, and the Bible began.



God said to Abraham, “Go from your land to a land that I will show you.”

“What is better about that land?” Abraham asked.

“It is the land that Adam lost,” God said.

“I don’t understand,” Abraham said nervously.

“When you obey me you gain paradise. When you do not, you lose it,” God said to Abraham.



One day God said to Abraham, “Sacrifice your son!” Abraham obeyed. He walked with his son for a long time. The son knew nothing.





The Bible

“Father, where is the lamb for the sacrifice?” Isaac asked.
“God will provide a lamb for the sacrifice,” Abraham replied.
Abraham believed that God was good.



One day God said to Abraham: “You will have to wander among aliens.”

“As you wish,” Abraham agreed.

“Other people will not understand the land I want to give you,” God said.



In heaven God said to Abraham, “Everything you did had profound significance.”

“I did not understand any of it,” Abraham said.

“But I did,” God replied.



In heaven God said to Abraham, “Now you must rest from all you did on earth.”

“I cannot relax here,” Abraham said. “I am used to moving from one place to another.”



In heaven God said to Abraham, “Your obedience will be greatly rewarded here.”

“So what is the reward here in heaven?” Abraham asked.

“Understanding what you see,” God said.





Finding God in a Tangled World



In heaven God said to Abraham, “You walked the path of Jesus.”

“I only went where you told me,” Abraham replied.

“My Son did the same,” God said to Abraham.



There was a man named Moses. God spoke with him.

“Leave this land,” God said. “It is a land of slavery. Celebrate a festival for me in the wilderness.”

Moses obeyed and departed. For forty years he wandered in the wilderness. Then he died.

“Why did you not let me enter the Promised Land?” he asked God.

“You were already in it,” God replied.

“How so?” Moses asked.

“Because I was leading you,” God said.



The shortest distance between two points is a straight line. By following a straight line one can walk from Egypt to Israel in a few days. Why did it take Moses forty years? Because his was not a path from one point to another, but from one way of thinking to another.



People dislike prophets because prophets are not sent to those who are behaving well.





The Bible



There was once a prophet. He told people what God told him. “The enemy will capture your city,” he told them on one occasion.

“Traitor!” the people cried, and they threw him into a pit. “I was not the one who thought that up!” he complained to God. “Let them throw you into the pit instead.” “They threw me into the pit when they put you there,” God said.



A prophet is always lonely with God.



There was a trumpeter whose job was to stand guard in the tower of the town fortress and warn people if he saw an enemy approaching. But he happened to live in peaceful times, and for years he had not had to sound his trumpet.

One day he could stand it no longer and started blowing his horn.

The townspeople were terrified. The merchants, clearing their tables, stored their goods in cellars, others buried their gold. Still others locked and fortified the city gates and prepared for battle.

When they realized that no enemy was approaching, they were furious at the trumpeter and put him to death. The trumpeter came before God. Feeling guilty he explained, “I didn’t mean to do it. I just had a really strong urge to blow my trumpet.”





Finding God in a Tangled World

“You did right,” God comforted him. “Did you not see that the enemy had already taken the whole city? You fell in an unequal fight.”



God appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Take Mary and the baby and flee from this land to Egypt!” Joseph obeyed. He sensed this was no ordinary dream. “Where are you off to?” his neighbors asked him. “I had a dream,” replied Joseph. “He’s a strange one,” the people said.



Once Mary asked Joseph, “Don’t you regret the day we met?” “I never dreamed that all that has happened would happen, but my life would not have been as interesting,” Joseph replied.



The apostles were ordinary people because they had to preach their message to all people.



The world was created so that the Bible could be created.

The end of the Bible is the beginning of the end of the world.

The Bible is finished.





The Bible



The Bible begins with the creation of the world and ends with the Promised Land. Jesus is the question of whether the Promised Land is to be found in this world.



God is the way from idolatry to the Promised Land.



The Promised Land is the Garden of Eden again.



God's fairy tales end in reality.

