

God's Story

The perfect beginning

- God created the world and the first humans: Adam and Eve (Hawwa)
- He put them into a perfect place: the Garden of Eden. They had the freedom to eat from any tree, with only one exception: God forbade them to eat from one special tree and warned them, "If you eat from it you'll die!"
- Everything was perfect: no sickness, no death, no shame and they were close to God.

Sin and shame came into the world

- Satan came to Eve and tempted her. She and Adam ate the forbidden fruit.
- Immediately they were afraid and felt shame because they realized they were naked, so they covered themselves with leaves and hid from God.
- God punished them for their disobedience and threw them out of the garden.
- *Interesting:* Adam and Eve just did one "small" sin, but the result was big judgment, death and a broken relationship with God.

A covering for sin and shame: new clothes and a promised savior

- God still loved them and did something very *interesting*: He changed their clothes (leaves) and gave them new clothes from animal skin.
- An animal had to die to cover the sin and shame of Adam and Eve.
- God gave this first sacrifice. Later prophets offered sacrifices as well.
- God promised that He would send a special sacrifice for us to save us.
- Prophets told in more detail about this promised savior, the "Messiah": He will overcome sin and shame and show us how to come close to God again.

Jesus, the Messiah (Isa Masih)

- Jesus was born of a virgin, Mary (Maryam). He was called "Messiah" and "Word of God".
- He loved people, never sinned, never killed anyone and never gathered riches.
- He did great miracles: healed the sick, cast out demons, raised the dead
- He taught us how God wants us to live: We need to turn away from sin and do what is good in God's eyes.

The Lamb of God - the sacrifice for us

- When the prophet John (Yahya) saw Jesus he said, "Look, this is the Lamb of God!"
- *Interesting:* When Jesus was still young He prophesied: "I must die, but I will rise again."
- Jesus was perfect, but some didn't like what He said and did. His enemies arrested Him and killed Him. He didn't resist them and died as God's sacrifice for you and me.
- But God raised Him to life again, just as Jesus had promised before!

We need a sacrifice

- Imagine that someone could make a video clip with all your sins and shame, including: all your dirty thoughts and all the situations where you thought nobody was watching. How would you feel if that came to light and others could see the video clip?
- God doesn't ignore these things and the consequences are punishment and death.
- We need a sacrifice to pay for our sin and cover our shame. This is what Jesus offers us.

A new life

- We can receive this offer by believing that and trusting Jesus.
- That means we believe in what He said and obey Him: We leave our old life behind and start to live like Jesus lived.
- When we do this, Jesus will cleanse us and restores our connection with God.
- For this, God will give us His Spirit. This "Holy Spirit" is God's power in us to resist evil, to teach us what God wants, and to be able to live like Jesus.

That is interesting, isn't it?

- Adam and Eve were given the death penalty even though they only did one sin.
- God changed their clothes through a sacrifice.
- Jesus was called the "Lamb of God". (A lamb is used as sacrifice.)
- Jesus prophesied His own death.
- Jesus died, but God raised Him to life again just as He had said.
- Jesus was sent by God as a sacrifice for us.
- God wants to give His Spirit to us.

My answer to God's offer

God has done His part. Now it's your turn...

Did I accept His offer?

Yes No Unsure

Am I sure that I belong to Jesus?

Yes No Unsure

Did I turn away from my sin and wrong ways?

Yes No A little bit

Am I sure that I received God's Spirit?

Yes No Unsure

What is hindering me?

What did I not understand? Where am I unsure?

Talking with God: My next steps

Here you find suggestions for a conversation with God. Add everything that is on your heart and that you want to tell God. If you feel unsure about certain points, you can tell that to God honestly. Use the support of someone who has experience in talking with God.

God, which things in my life are not like You want them? Which sins do I need to turn away from?

God, I thank You that I can talk with You. I realize that I didn't live according to Your will. I'm sorry. Please forgive me that I _____ (name what God showed you).

Jesus, I thank You that You made a solution and that You died for me as a sacrifice. I'm ready to change my life and get rid of everything You call sin. I want to live according to Your will.

Holy Spirit, please help me with that. Cleanse me and fill me.

If you can say all this from your heart then let someone explain to you how the start of this new life works.