

REGINA KANTE
2023

RE-ENTRY




HEY YOU!



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Il really want you to
grow in faith.
Together,
step-by-step,
Ill walk you through
re-entry,
to advise and help you
as you face
the unknown.
This is what Im praying
for.

This booklet aims to
help you through the
transition process
and also, to deepen
your love for Jesus,
a love which you can
then
share with others.

*"Don't cry
because
good days
are over,
but be
happy that
they
existed."
Unknown.*

#FAITH-CHECK

The time has come. The day of your final departure is rolling closer, or perhaps it's already behind you. Perhaps it happened unexpectedly and quickly; perhaps it's already been planned in advance. I don't know. The main thing is it's here! But what now? How do you move forward?

We really want to give God a special place during this time of change, because we're convinced that we can only make the best of our experiences with Him. If there's anybody who really understands us, then it's Him.

But before we can ever arrive, first we've got to manage saying goodbye and leaving. What does this mean for you?

#lifecycle #God #crossing #transformation

My thoughts:



*Just one last look at the
people, at the house;
to breathe in the air;
to soak up the surroundings
one more time.
To feel the pain of leaving.*



"Go into the land that I will show you!" - God

God sent Abram to Canaan. No sooner had he got there than famine broke out. Just imagine it - famine in the land God has promised you! On top of this, he then had a problem with his nephew, Lot, and they had to split up. And to end it all, war broke out and Abraham had to get involved in the fight to rescue his nephew. You can read this in Genesis 12-14.

What expectations or fears do you think Abraham had when God said that he had a new land for him?

What are expectations? Expectations mean what you think or imagine about what will happen in the future. It's a bit like thinking you're going to get a mobile phone for your birthday or that your friend will stay your friend forever. Sometimes we're aware of these thoughts but sometimes we don't even realise we have them. It's completely normal to have expectations, but sometimes they can influence us or cause us stress if, for example, they come as a surprise because we don't get what we're expecting.

Expectations depend on various things. For example, they can be influenced by what has happened in the past. You could've travelled to your home country and have even spent a long time living there. Perhaps you've had a similar experience to what is happening now. If you've already had a good experience and everything is going really well, perhaps you expect that that will happen again. These are positive expectations.





But if you've had a bad experience and things haven't gone so well, then maybe you're thinking that the same thing will happen again. This is what you call a negative expectation.

But expectations also depend on information. The more information you have about someone or something, the clearer a picture you can build of what might happen. If, for example, you're up-to-date with what's going on in your home country then you can better imagine what you're heading into. And culture also plays a role. Do you expect people to tell you the hard-core truth or that perhaps they might lie just to make you feel better?

And of course, our expectations are influenced by our own personalities. If you are naturally an optimistic sort of person then you will head in that direction and have positive expectations. On the other hand, if you tend to see things from a pessimistic point of view or you're an anxious type, then your expectations will tend to be negative.

And when it comes down to it, what are fears? Fear means that you're worrying about something or you're anxious about something that might happen in the future. For example, you could be worried about getting bad marks at school and not making the grade.

But I want to tell you something really important: it won't achieve anything waiting to see whether your expectations or your fears come true! Rather instead, I want to suggest you think about the following questions: what is my personal goal for the next part of my life? What can I do in my home country that I can't do now?



*Sometimes we
don't even
realize we have
them!*

#JehovahJireh #Godsees #trust #growth

Do you know what happened with Abram next? He had lots more challenges and difficulties to overcome. Once he gave his wife some bad advice that led to the birth of Ishmael and further trouble. But in the end, Isaac, the son that God promised him was born into the world. However, then God told Abraham (in between there was a name change) to offer his son on an altar! Just imagine - for any dad that would've been really, really hard. Thankfully, it was only a test of faith.

Abraham's journey was full of difficulties but Abraham did not give up. He kept going. Why? Because he always remembered what God had promised him: "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." Genesis 12:2-3.

Sometimes life is just like jumping into cold water. It's really difficult, because you've got to leave the safe ground you're standing on. But you never know what surprises are waiting for you round the corner. Perhaps a new friend or the possibility of further education? Or perhaps getting your driving license at last?

You know what, sometimes things that happen in life are tests of faith. This means that in certain difficult situations we actually have to trust God more. Everything can look like God is not helping us. But these tests are important because through them we grow in faith.

Would Abraham do what God was asking? Would he trust that God had a plan? Or would he find a way where he didn't have to kill his son?

There's an amazing promise in Genesis 22:14 - what does it mean to you?



THERE IS A
CRUCIBLE AND A
FURNACE FOR GOLD
AND SILVER, BUT
THE LORD TRIES A
MAN'S HEART.
PROVERBS 17:3



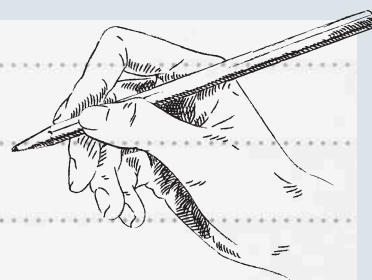
Previously, how have you prepared for tests and exams? If you want to achieve great results, usually the key to success is good preparation. Perhaps in the past when you didn't prepare well, you didn't do so well. However, not doing well in your tests does not mean the end of your educational journey. Education and study continue. Sometimes you need to re-sit the exam, sometimes not. Exams are more important for you than for the examiner – they give you an idea of where you stand.

Something to think about – with God there are also tests of faith. Yet God doesn't test you so that you will fail, but rather that through them you will grow in faith; by understanding where you've gone wrong you can put things right. Even in Psalm 139 King David prayed: 'Search me, God, and know my heart.'

Don't be too hard on yourself if things don't always go well. Use every test as a chance to learn. Tests are never simple. They are challenging and can be very difficult. Sometimes, perhaps you just feel like shouting: "This is too much!" But just because something is difficult doesn't mean that it's wrong. We don't always see the light at the end of the tunnel when we're in a difficult situation. But one day you will be able to look back and see what God has done, even if for the moment everything seems confused.

Be COURAGEOUS

For me, risking a step into
the unknown means:



I'VE BECOME COMFORTABLE AT BEING
UNCOMFORTABLE;
CURIOUS ABOUT HOW THE WORLD
WORKS AND DOESN'T WORK; AND A
WANDERER WHO ALSO LIKES TO GROW
ROOTS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.'
REBECCA HOPKINS.

Which of the following
applies to you most?

- ☐ Leadership
- ☐ Fear of failure
- ☐ Optimism
- ☐ Feeling inferior
- ☐ Insecure
- ☐ Thirst for adventure
- ☐ No pain, no gain



*For we have here no lasting city,
but we seek the city that is to come.*

Hebrews 13, 14



Space Travel

The majority of TCKs (Third Culture Kids) would expect to return to their home countries. 'Rocket launchings' and 'Landings' will be precisely planned, right down to the last minute. So, you really need to be prepared.

ROCKET LAUNCHING

Life is just normal. You know your place in the community and you belong. Everybody around you knows who you are and what you like; your chores and responsibilities are respected and recognised. You feel accepted. You are in the 'Space Station'.



COUNTDOWN AND IGNITION

Then, one day you find out that you've got to leave and your life begins to change. This can be really difficult because you've probably got lots of good friends you will have to leave behind. If this is the case, then often a process begins in which you start to separate and pull back from people and things you're emotionally attached to. This can feel frustrating and confusing, both for you and your friends. But it's okay to be sad and it's important that you say goodbye properly, before you 'Take off'. Saying farewell is an important part of the transition process. You say goodbye to the things that are normal and certain, and make place for the new.

ASCENT AND SEPARATION

'Chaos' – you find yourself in what seems to be a very unstable phase. You ask yourself: where's my place and what'll be expected of me? Your parents will be going through this process too and will be concentrating on their own survival. It'll seem as if everybody is focused on their own challenges. Instead of looking at everything through rose-tinted spectacles, you're still seeing everything through 'foreign lenses' and can only see a few of the nice things about returning home.

People like to think that you've settled in well, whereas in fact you still feel like a stranger. During this time the whole family will need plenty of patience and the ability to relate to each other with love, understanding and consideration. It's an enormous adjustment with a lot of new things to process. Most people will have no idea about your story and your past experience, and possibly may not even be interested.

This transition process can be difficult and can resonate with feelings of disappointment. Sometimes you can look back to how things were before, where everything seemed simpler; perhaps whatever's happening now doesn't match your expectations. But even during this time there is still the opportunity to grow and develop.

ATMOSPHERIC RE-ENTRY

However, things will move on and the next phase should be a little less chaotic. Even though you still feel vulnerable and insecure, you're ready for new things to happen and to be part of a new community. You may often feel homesick, but gradually you'll integrate better into society. Others will begin to notice that you're here to stay and not just to visit, and therefore they will be more likely to include you in their lives. Nevertheless, you still need to take the initiative and the trouble to build new relationships.

Priscilla: 'It's important to practice dealing with public transport. On the first few trips, it's really helpful to go with people you know.'

Miriam: 'Seek out good, new friends here, in your homeland, and don't shrink into your shell thinking that your old life used to be better.'



Katrin: 'Give yourself time – you don't need to achieve everything in the first few weeks or months.'

SAFE LANDING

At last you've arrived! Once again, you're part of a permanent community. You've learnt a new way of life and you know your place. You feel safe and secure and your life will play out in the present rather than wallowing in the past. This transition phase could last for about 3 to 4 years, although I will add that everybody's experience is different.

#Identity #Who.am.I

Perhaps right now, you're asking yourself: who am I? This is a significant question that's not just relevant to TCK's or foreigners. In actual fact, at some point in their lives everybody asks this question.

Especially during this process of settling into a new country, these kinds of questions tend to emerge in various ways without us even realising. This is because we're used to being with people who think the same as us. Questions can bother us like: 'Do I fit in here or am I different?' and, 'If I feel different, do I mind this or is it a problem for me?'

In the Bible, time and again in Paul's letters we come across the phrase: 'In Christ'.

Why does he use this phrase so often?

What has this to do with our identity?

Have a think about how your identity in Christ makes you unique and how you can build the rest of your life on this.

Put a cross by the most accurate answer:

Look in the mirror...

- I feel fine.
- I don't like myself.
- I am content and thankful to God.
- I make the most of my appearance.

How do you let your emotions influence you?

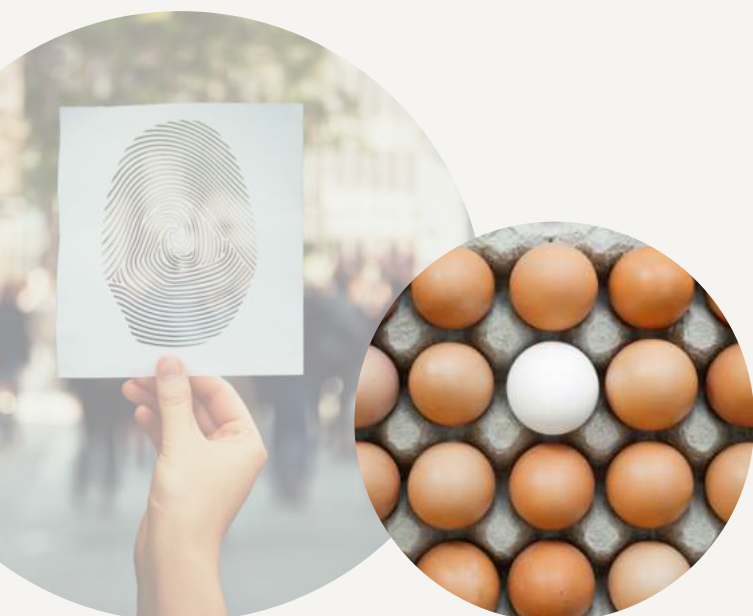
- I do whatever I want.
- I pay no attention to how I feel.
- They control my life.
- Feelings are important but they can be misleading so I try not to react without reflection.
- I only believe what I see.

My relationship with my family is...

- Excellent.
- Could be better.
- Shaped by conflict.
- Shaped by love.
- So, so.

When making a decision what's important to you?

- It's got to be good for me.
- It's got to suit my family and friends.
- It's got to be in line with God's will.
- I ask myself: what would Jesus do?
- There's got to be something in it for me.
- I think about how it would affect other people first.





make your tick

true

No, that's not
true

No risk, no fun

☐☐

I've stocked up

☐☐

I've got anti-slip socks

☐☐

Airbag - of course, I know what that is

☐☐

I find the noise from the

☐☐

AC machine comforting

I check out what everyone

☐☐

else is doing first

Crisis follows crisis

☐☐

Cuddly toys are my classmates

☐☐

When I'm shopping, I always haggle over price

☐☐

I feel unsettled if other people

☐☐

understand the Bible differently

I've always got a packet of tissues handy

☐☐

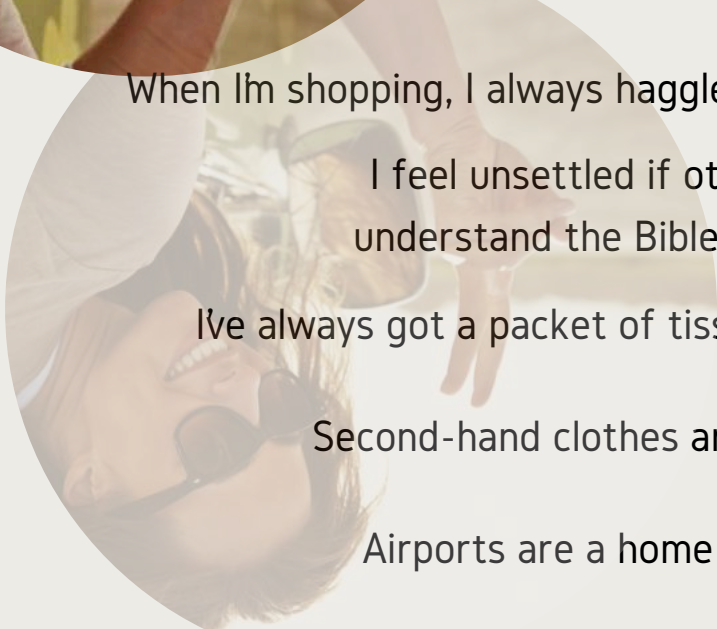
Second-hand clothes are the best

☐☐

Airports are a home from home

☐☐

Sometimes I dream in another language

☐☐

"Who am I?"



Write down as much as possible about yourself: what you do, what you wear, where you come from, your hobbies, what you're learning at school - basically everything about you. In one colour, underline what's most important to you and in another colour, what will never change e.g. skin colour.



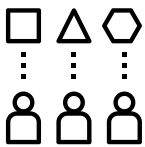
Nationality
(Culture, Ancestry)



Family



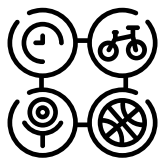
School,
education



Character
(Sporty, musical,
artistic, analytic etc.)



Socio-economic
situation
(Well-off,
middle-class,
struggling)



Hobbies, activities



Health
(Medical conditions,
allergies etc)



Beliefs
(Disciple, sceptic, nominal etc)

....?

"Who am I?"



Your identity in Christ - this is how God sees you: mark in colour what will never change. I am...



saved and forgiven
Colossians 1:14



made righteous,
justified
1 Corinthians 1:30
Romans 5:1



Chosen, holy and loved
Colossians 3:12

God's friend
John 15:15

Bought with a price, I belong to God
1 Corinthians 6:20

Rescued from the kingdom of
darkness; Colossians 1:13
John 8:36



made holy
1 Corinthians 6:11

free from condemnation
Romans 8:1



Child of God
Galatians 4:7 and John 1:12



Citizens of Heaven
Philippians 3:20

temple of the Holy Spirit
1 Corinthians 6:19

An heir of God and a
co-heir with Christ
Romans 8:17



a new creation
2 Corinthians 5:17

part of the body of Christ
1 Corinthians 12:27





#secret.immigrants

Living for some time in your Mission country, often gave you the impression that you were a foreigner. This could also have come from other sources, like your skin colour, the clothes you wore, your worldview and how you think about things. Perhaps you never felt as if you belonged, that you stood out in strange surroundings.

Although in your home country you're not a foreigner, nevertheless sometimes you can feel like one. It sounds like a paradox but there are reasons behind this. People who grow up in different countries and then return to their homeland are often considered to be 'secret immigrants'. For example, this applies to TCKs who've grown up in a foreign country because their parents worked there. If after several years abroad TCKs return, they may look like everybody else but inside view things quite differently. This can lead to difficulties, because even though they look the same, people around them will expect them to think just like them.

While over time, slowly and with patience, immigrants become recognised and accepted - unfortunately it's not always the case for 'secret immigrants'. Because you don't necessarily stand out, you're expected to have the same cultural mindset and understanding. In reality, you can feel just as alien as in any other country.

It's important to know that you're not alone in this. Many TCKs and other people in similar situations feel exactly the same. It's okay to be different and to have a different perspective. It's also okay to be open about your feelings and experiences so that people around you can have a better idea of how you're getting on. Sometimes all you need is the opportunity to explain and a little empathy to make your circumstances understood. Think about your differences as strengths that make you richer. You see the world from a broader perspective and have the advantage of a different point of view. In many of life's situations this can do a lot of good, helping to build bridges between people and cultures.

'If you say, "The Lord
is my refuge," and you
make the Most High
your dwelling...'

Psalm 91:9





#LanguageMishmash

Sounds familiar? You speak at least two languages fluently and of course, without even realising it, from time to time you mix them up. Or perhaps you even do it deliberately because sometimes you just can't think of that one word to describe something - e.g. you know, that thing you use to gather up all the fallen leaves in the garden? Even though it gets really irritating, it's absolutely fine! You can just ask what the right word is for that thing you use in the garden. Have the confidence and courage to Stand Out!

at "home"



"It was such a big disappointment because I'd always thought that when I finally came 'home' I'd stop feeling so different."

on paper



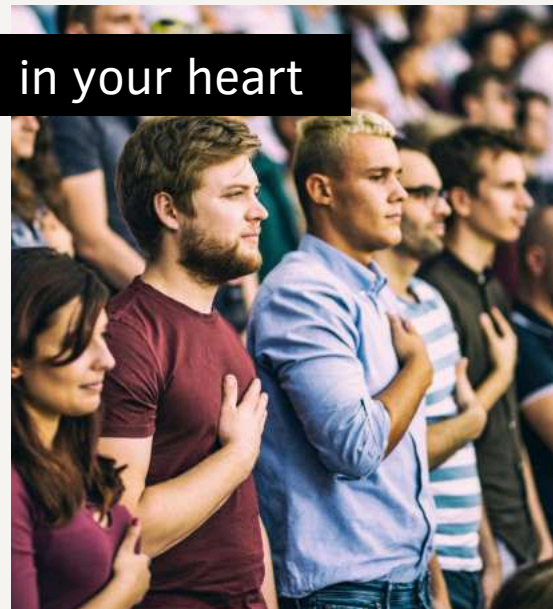
How many visas have you got? What does it say on your passport? What is your nationality?

somewhere else...



How many years have you lived abroad?

in your heart



What nationality is closest to your heart? Which national identity really resonates for you?



"same"

What do you have in common with young people in your home country?



Foreigner

What makes you different from other immigrants?

"different"

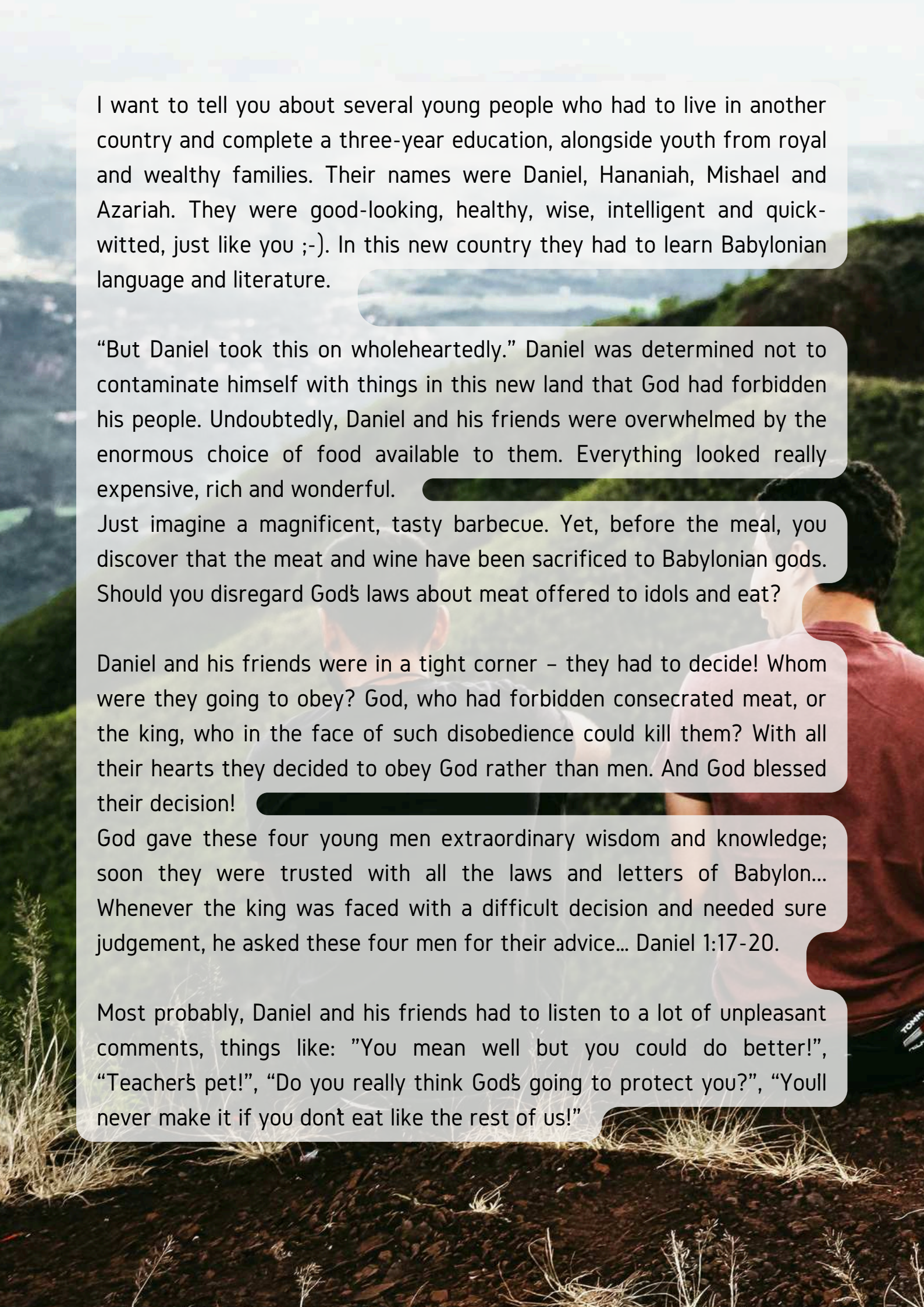


What makes you different from young people in your home country?

Third culture



"The first culture depends on your parents' homeland. The second culture, on the foreign country you're living in. And the third culture is somewhere between the two, independent of your nationality."

A background image showing two people from behind, looking out over a vast, hilly landscape under a cloudy sky. The person on the left is wearing a dark shirt, and the person on the right is wearing a red shirt. The ground in the foreground is dark and appears to be a path or a field with some dry grass.

I want to tell you about several young people who had to live in another country and complete a three-year education, alongside youth from royal and wealthy families. Their names were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. They were good-looking, healthy, wise, intelligent and quick-witted, just like you ;-). In this new country they had to learn Babylonian language and literature.

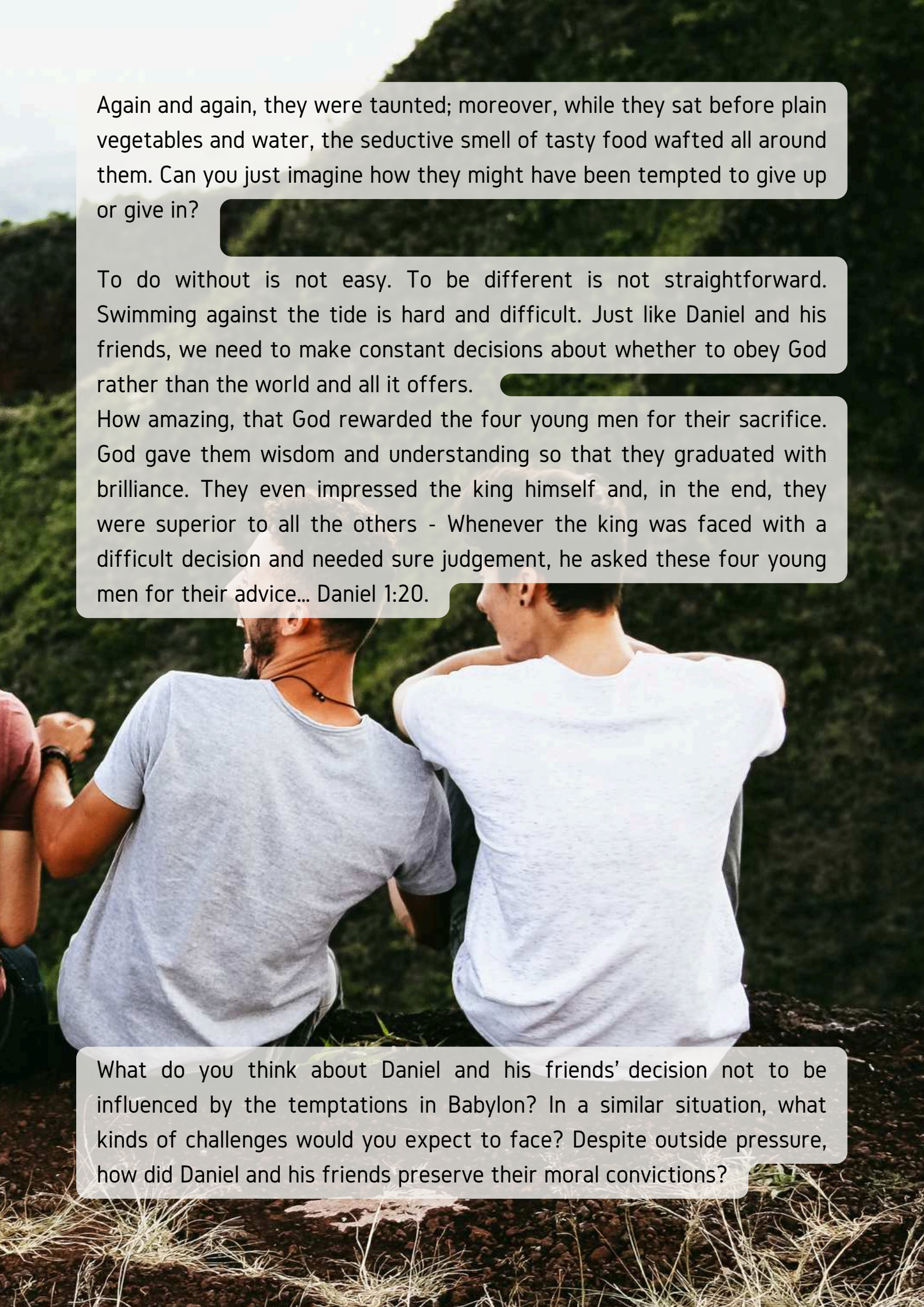
“But Daniel took this on wholeheartedly.” Daniel was determined not to contaminate himself with things in this new land that God had forbidden his people. Undoubtedly, Daniel and his friends were overwhelmed by the enormous choice of food available to them. Everything looked really expensive, rich and wonderful.

Just imagine a magnificent, tasty barbecue. Yet, before the meal, you discover that the meat and wine have been sacrificed to Babylonian gods. Should you disregard God’s laws about meat offered to idols and eat?

Daniel and his friends were in a tight corner – they had to decide! Whom were they going to obey? God, who had forbidden consecrated meat, or the king, who in the face of such disobedience could kill them? With all their hearts they decided to obey God rather than men. And God blessed their decision!

God gave these four young men extraordinary wisdom and knowledge; soon they were trusted with all the laws and letters of Babylon... Whenever the king was faced with a difficult decision and needed sure judgement, he asked these four men for their advice... Daniel 1:17-20.

Most probably, Daniel and his friends had to listen to a lot of unpleasant comments, things like: “You mean well but you could do better!”, “Teacher’s pet!”, “Do you really think God’s going to protect you?”, “You’ll never make it if you don’t eat like the rest of us!”

A photograph of two young men sitting on a grassy hill, looking out at a dense forest. The man on the left is wearing a light blue t-shirt and a black necklace. The man on the right is wearing a white t-shirt. They are both looking away from the camera, towards the forest. The background is a lush green forest with a clear sky.

Again and again, they were taunted; moreover, while they sat before plain vegetables and water, the seductive smell of tasty food wafted all around them. Can you just imagine how they might have been tempted to give up or give in?

To do without is not easy. To be different is not straightforward. Swimming against the tide is hard and difficult. Just like Daniel and his friends, we need to make constant decisions about whether to obey God rather than the world and all it offers.

How amazing, that God rewarded the four young men for their sacrifice. God gave them wisdom and understanding so that they graduated with brilliance. They even impressed the king himself and, in the end, they were superior to all the others - Whenever the king was faced with a difficult decision and needed sure judgement, he asked these four young men for their advice... Daniel 1:20.

What do you think about Daniel and his friends' decision not to be influenced by the temptations in Babylon? In a similar situation, what kinds of challenges would you expect to face? Despite outside pressure, how did Daniel and his friends preserve their moral convictions?

Most probably, your classmates have got a lot to say about many subjects: friendships, climate-change, money, catastrophes, sport, sexuality, the future, racism, social media or mental health.

If you read through the news from this year, very soon you'll get a picture of what interests your age group in your home country: **pandemic, lockdown, inflation, war, gender, digitalisation, AI...**

In what respect can we learn from the story of Daniel and his friends when it comes to holding on to belief in a pluralistic and challenging environment? On the internet have a look at this year's headlines and news before you return to your home country.



Energiesparen, Tierwohl, Klimawandel: Selbst Spielzeughersteller widmen sich heute mit neuen Ideen und Materialien Umweltthemen. Ist das ökologisch oder nur Greenwashing? Von Frauke Suhr

21. MÄRZ 2023, 15:02 UHR

Zu viel Aufklärung: Grundschulkinder sind vom Sexualkunde-Unterricht überfordert



23. Januar 2023 um 19:54 Uhr

Irgendwann im Laufe der Schulzeit kommt das Thema Sexualkunde auf den Lehrplan. An einem Kölner Gymnasium läuft das ganz besonders ab: So sollen 11- und 12-jährige Kinder mithilfe von Arbeitsblättern bestimmen, ob sie sich weiblich oder männlich fühlen. Auch eine Geschlechtsangleichung wird als Option erklärt.

Erste Fälle auch in Deutschland

WHO-Experte warnt vor neuer Corona-Variante „Arcturus“

Protest der „Letzten Generation“: Auch Aktivisten aus Deutschland angereist

Dass Klimakleber über Grenzen hinausgehen, zeigen genervte Autofahrer. Agieren. Die „Letzte Generation“ soll es auch in Österreich und ihre Anhänger kleben sich auch im Nachbarland immer häufiger auf die Straßen.



Linz (ptp007/06.03.2023/10:02) -

Panikattacken, Angst und Dauerstress- psychische Belastungen bei Jugendlichen häufen sich. Leistung, Leistung und noch mal Leistung, alles dreht sich darum und das vor allem exzessiv in der Oberstufe. Die Matura naht und die Aufgaben häufen sich. Hinzukam in den letzten Jahren die psychische Belastung durch die Coronakrise. Fazit: Immer mehr Jugendliche stehen unter großem psychischem Druck und haben mit den Folgen des immensen Stresses zu kämpfen.

Moses

was brought up by foster parents in a strange land. To the Egyptians he was Hebrew - to the Hebrews he was Egyptian.

Joseph

was sold into Egypt against his will and went through a dark valley. In this difficult time, he learned that God brings good out of bad.

Ruth

left her home and her friends and journeyed into a strange land with another culture. She had the choice to become bitter or to look forward.

Daniel

dared to be different and lived by his convictions in an alien environment. He stood by his beliefs and pulled the rug out from under the feet of the surrounding gods.



your multicultural experiences

Because you've grown up in a different country or even in several different countries, you've got a wealth of experience that has moulded you into the person you are today, and enabled you to consider life from a variety of perspectives. From your experience of living abroad, what positive things have you brought with you?



listen carefully if you can learn something!

Proverbs 23:12 (NKJV)



"Lots of people in your new environment will find it exciting, interesting and even amusing that you've grown up abroad and there will be a thousand questions. Some of these questions will seem stupid but think about the fact that these people have not had your experience and therefore they can't be expected to know. Just because lots of people will be asking you questions about what your life was like, what school was like etc, doesn't mean that your life is interesting and theirs isn't... Ask questions in return - what kind of hobbies they have, what music they listen to and what silly pranks they might have played as children." Miriam

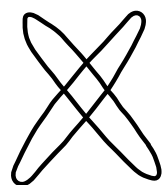
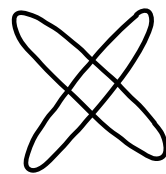
It can be a real challenge to settle back into your homeland as a TCK. Sometimes it can feel as if nobody else shares the same experiences or feelings, or as if nobody is really trying to understand you. In these moments it's important to try and find a way to connect with your new surroundings, without losing your identity.



Active listening and asking questions. Instead of expecting the other person to take responsibility to understand you, take active steps. Try to get to know people better. Ask good questions and show interest in their stories.



Keep updated but enjoy where you are. It's a great idea to get lots of information beforehand about culture, educational opportunities, clubs or topical events. The internet offers many resources. But don't forget to make the most of the last days in your mission country.



Keep it real.

It's tempting to change who you are just so that you can fit into a group that you want to belong to. Things may go well for a while but sooner or later storms will break the surface. Eventually you'll need to make a decision about whom you're going to follow and whether you're going to stick to your convictions. In such moments remember: "I worship the Lord, the God of heaven..." Jonah 1:9

#Comfortzone

It's soft. It's long. Sometimes it goes round the corner. Sometimes it's brown, sometimes grey, sometimes colourful, sometimes made from leather. It sits in the living room. Most of the time it's comfortable. Sometimes, it's so comfortable that you can just fall asleep on it.

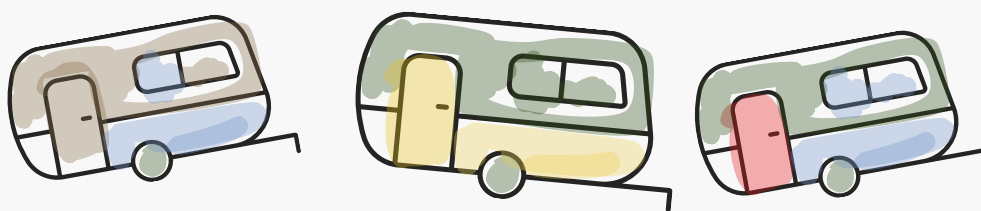
What is it? _____

Again and again, God calls us to leave our comfort zone so that we can grow. Every time we do something for the first time it feels really difficult – whether it's getting a driving license, getting a job or taking part in a meeting where we don't know anybody. But our development lies directly in these challenges. In the Bible, we've read about people who've had to leave familiar surroundings and have ventured into new terrain – think about Abraham, Daniel, Ruth, Joseph, even Jesus as a boy and many others.

1. When we're faced with new challenges, what do you think we can learn from these bible stories?
2. Out of the comfort zone. Read Matthew 14:22-33. When really makes things difficult when you're trying something for the first time?



*"If you want to walk
on water,
you've got to get out
of the boat."*



#mobility

Up till now your life has been shaped by lots of movement, a cycle of change, departures and farewells. Innumerable times you've had to say goodbye to dear friends and just as many moments in which you've had to get to know new friends. Such a quantity of experience can sometimes be stressful, but I would like to suggest an interesting way of visualising your life's journey.

Imagine every year of your life to be equivalent to a coloured caravan. To depict the different stages of your life so far, you can colour your caravan in different shades. Here are a few ideas:

Blue – the years in which you lived with your parents in your homeland.

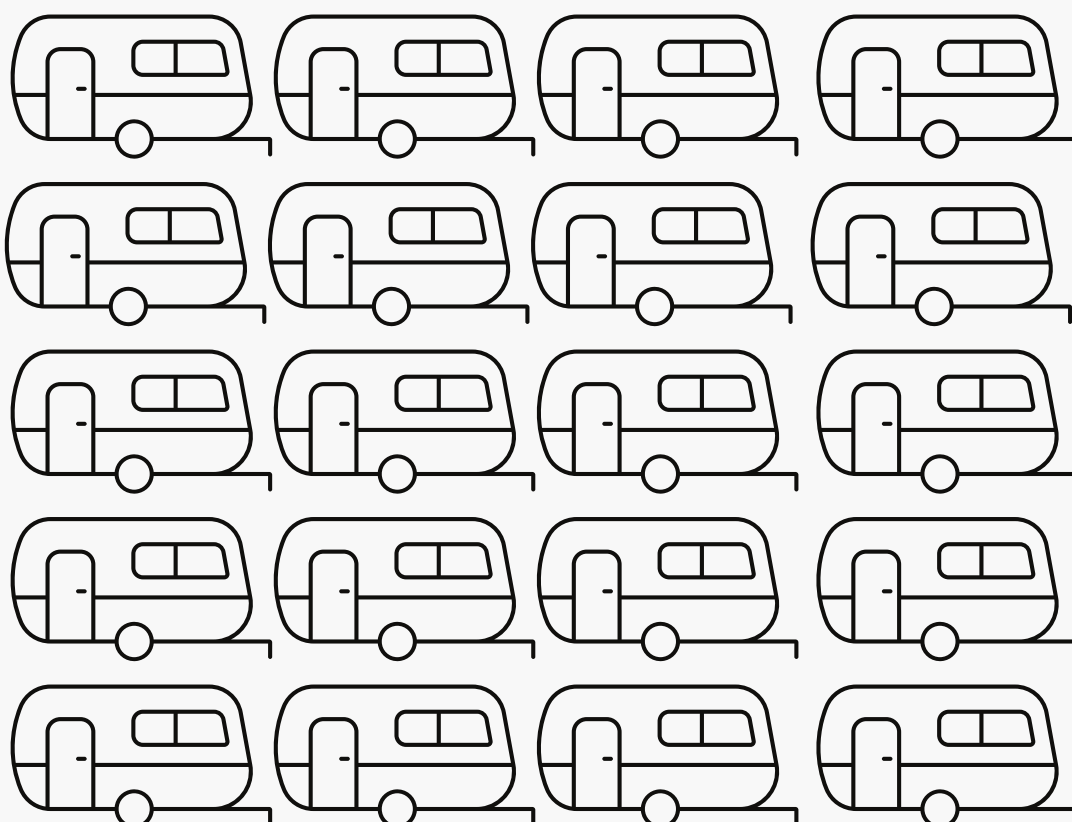
Brown – the years you lived in another place while your parents trained.

Green – the years in which you lived with your parents in mission.

Red – the years in which you were based in an international school.

Yellow - the years in which you were separated from a family member.

You could join up the different colour caravans if you were in more than one mission country, or if one year had several phases to it e.g. if you were in an international school for one month and then another month with your parents. Each colour combination represents a slice of your exciting life so far. This kind of visualisation can help you understand your journey better and to treasure the different experiences you've had. It can show how diverse and colourful your life has been up till now, and how each phase has shaped you. Think about the different layers of experience and how they make you the person you are today. Be thankful for each phase of your life-cycle, no matter what colour it is!





‘As different as people are, each TCK is just as varied. For some it was particularly difficult to grow up as a TCK, however for others it was easy.’

Naturally, because you’ve lived in different countries, you’ve had the advantage of not only gaining from the challenge of adventure but also from many really special experiences.

What advantages do you see in growing up in different cultures?

What particular abilities or accomplishments have you developed?

What qualities or traditions do you treasure the most from your guest country?

Are there particular childhood moments or experiences living in different cultures that really stand out?

What advice would you give other young people who are growing up in different cultures?



- Bilingual-multilingual
- Adaptable
- Special faith-experience
-
-



LEAVING
HOME-NEW
BEGINNING

Abram had to say farewell to
his friends and family.
What would be the last words
you would pass on to your
friends
if you knew you would never
see them again?
What should your friends
never forget?





Which relationships mean so much that you want to make sure you keep in contact? How can you make this happen?

At the moment, which person in your mission country have you got a strong relationship with? Who are your best friends? What are you doing to separate yourself from them?

It won't be possible to keep in contact with everyone. Even though it's sad, that's completely okay. Never forget: God understands how you feel. Your relationship with him is the most important. He's not tied to time and place, and he's not dependent on the internet or your mobile connection.

A temporary, one-year stay 'at home' is quite different to actually being at home permanently. You've lived so long abroad that you've become completely used to things – the people, the language, the food, the customs. It can be really difficult to return to your homeland and get used to things there again, when you've only had short visits. It's important to realise that returning and feeling at home again takes time. Be patient with yourself.

Which places mean a lot to you? Did you know that you can say goodbye to places as well as people? Before you leave, take some photos of the places that have meant a lot to you in the last year and make a point of visiting them. For example, it could be a football field – perhaps play one last game of football there.



“Every farewell seems difficult. You leave a little bit of your heart behind.”

Walter Mauerhof

#farewell

As far as is possible with you, before you begin your journey, there's a few important things to consider about your departure from the place which for a long time you've called home.

An important step is to lay aside and let go of all possible arguments and conflicts. It's normal for disagreements to arise with interpersonal relationships but you should try to settle these tensions before you go. The feeling of reconciliation is indescribably valuable and will bring you and the people around you, peace. It's never too late to deal with misunderstandings and to reinstate peace.

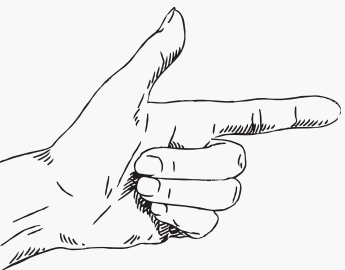
Think what it means to appreciate your friendships. Your time here has given you valuable relationships that perhaps you might not be able to continue with. Tell your friends how important they are to you. Express your respect (in words, gifts, time...) Tell your friends that you're thankful for them.

Allow positive as well as negative feelings!

How would you really like to say goodbye to your friends?

What would you like to give them?

What moments would you like to share with them one more time?



“Some moments seem so perfect, so good, that it's difficult to let go. To repeat them is impossible. Letting go hurts – yet nevertheless it's important.

The small things as well as the big things – pack lovely memories in your suitcase; leave bad ones lying on the floor; take experiences with you and shut the door behind you.”

Farewells are a normal part of life! In the Bible we can learn from lots of stories about farewells – how best we can navigate them.

“Here I stand. Testify against me in the presence of the Lord and his anointed. Whose ox have I taken? Whose donkey have I taken? Whom have I cheated? Whom have I oppressed? From whose hand have I accepted a bribe to make me shut my eyes? If I have done any of these things, I will make it right... As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you. And I will teach you the way that is good and right.”

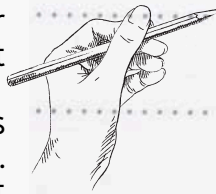
This is an extract from Samuel's farewell speech (1 Samuel 12:3, 23). Samuel stuck to just two important points:

1. Go in peace/clear up differences and misunderstandings.
2. Express love, thankfulness and respect.

New things can arise from saying goodbye - these can be really amazing and cool. At the same time, they can also awaken feelings of insecurity. Perhaps you'll find yourself asking lots of questions.

What would I like to begin in my new life? What training would I like to start? Is further education right for me? Can I achieve my dreams? Will I make new friends?

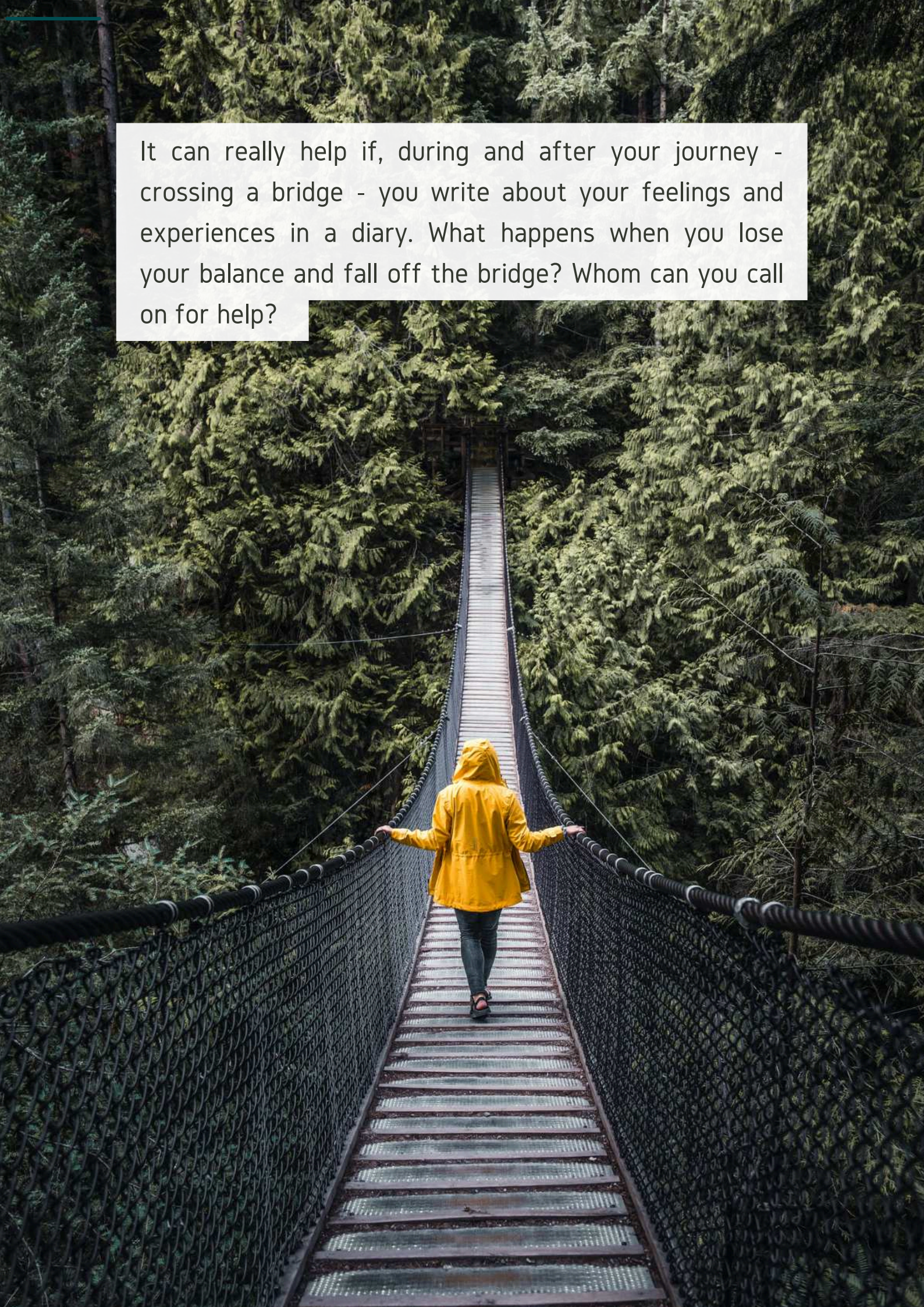
Which questions are swirling round your mind when you think about your next steps?



When one door closes
another door opens...



It can really help if, during and after your journey - crossing a bridge - you write about your feelings and experiences in a diary. What happens when you lose your balance and fall off the bridge? Whom can you call on for help?





#Home

To be on the road, the search for home, the feeling of not having arrived yet - all these are recurring themes in the Bible (read Hebrews 11). Amazingly, in the middle of the desert, it was an angel who asked Hagar the biggest TCK question ever. "Where have you come from and where are you going?" (Genesis 16:8).

Hagar was Sarah's slave, the wife of Abraham. Sarah couldn't have children and so she suggested that Abraham sleep with Hagar to have a child they could call their own. When Hagar became pregnant, so the problems began. Sarah treated Hagar badly, and Hagar scorned her mistress. Hagar's life became unbearable and she fled into the desert, pregnant and alone. Here comes the most astonishing part of the story: in her despair, she met an angel of the Lord who asked the question of all questions. Her answer was short and to the point: "I'm on the run from my mistress Sarah." That was all she had to say for herself. And yet God spoke into her life, and gave her definite directions for her next step. This meeting with God changed Hagar. She was the first person in the Bible to give God a name. She called him: El-Roi - the God who sees me.

What does it mean to you that God sees you?



How do you feel when people ask you “Where are you from?”

What is your answer?



What do you define as home? Is it a place, a culture, a community or something different?

If you feel at home in a different culture but at the same time don't really feel you belong anywhere, how do you cope?

In different cultures or new surroundings, how does your faith give you comfort and support?

Especially for young people, it's important to feel accepted in a group, to feel you 'belong'. A sense of belonging is a fundamental need for everyone, not just TCK's. What does it mean to you to 'belong'?

*A quote from Fyodor
Dostoevsky
“To be homeless means
suffering.”*



My home?

πίστις – pistis

Now faith [pistis] is the substance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:1

In most of the places in the New Testament where it talks about faith, it means belief in the sense of absolute trust, absolute devotion and absolute obedience to Christ. This is a faith that is demonstrated in practical ways in our everyday lives. This means more than the faith that makes us children of God but rather faith that characterises us as such as long as we are here on earth. As children of God, what should our focus be regarding home? (Hebrews 11:1-16)



#Belonging

TCK's develop relationships with different cultures but not solely with one. Living in a variety of cultures they can't focus on one alone; this means a constant feeling of hovering between belonging everywhere and nowhere. ("I feel most at home in an airport.") Other TCK's mention that a true sense of belonging often only develops through relationships with people who have been through similar experiences. Are there any other TCK's that you can form a friendship with?

#Cultureconfetti

Where do you come from? This simple question is one that everybody gets asked at least once in their life. For many the answer will trip off their tongue, however, this can cause a real headache for TCK's. What does this person actually mean by that? The place where I'm living now? Where my parents live? Where I was born? Or where I grew up? For TCK's, this question is more about an emotional feeling than anything geographical. Your home is defined by your relationships. Who do you feel at home with? Imagine that you've just been asked this question. How can you use it to talk to people about your faith?

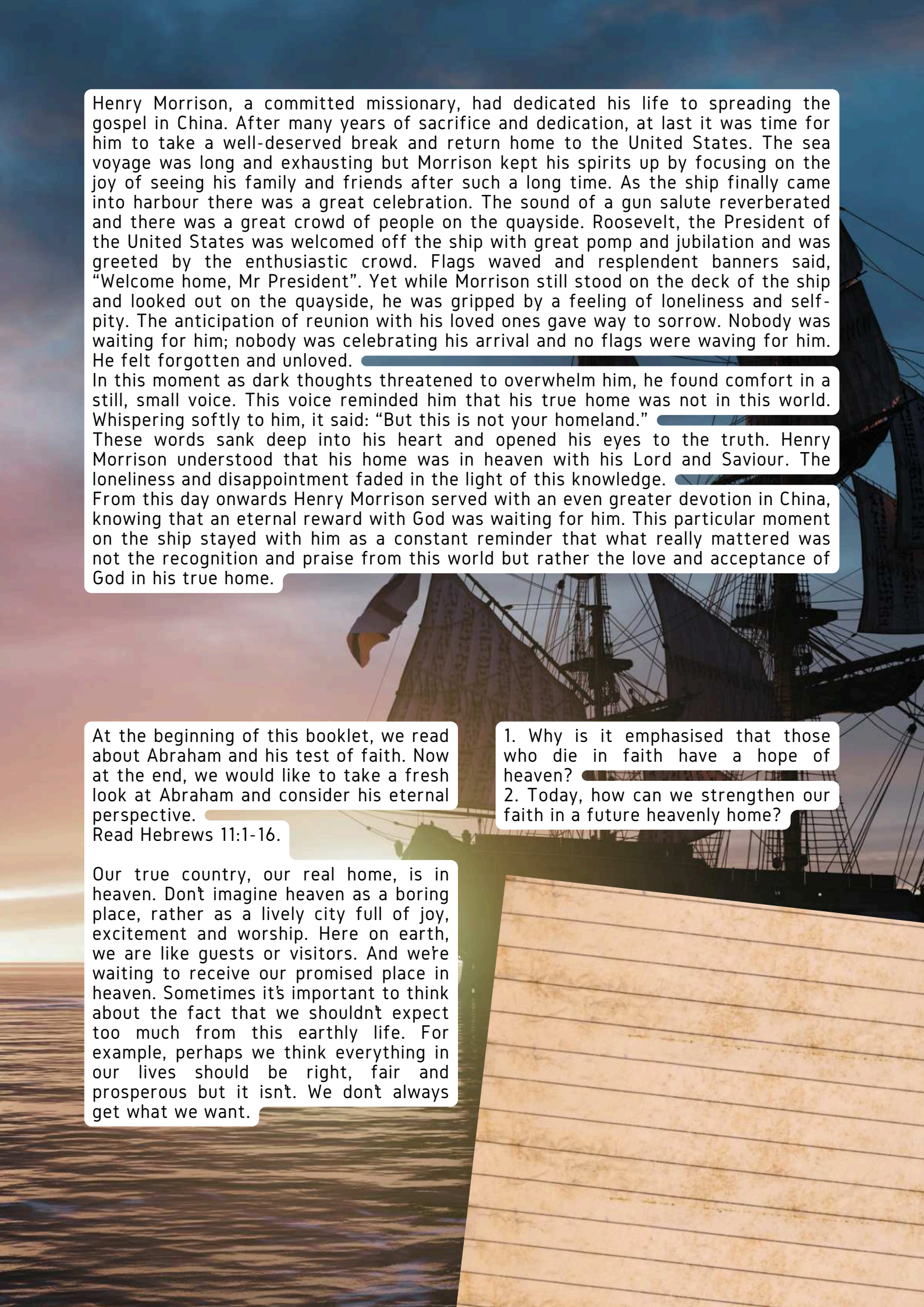


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'When the need for belonging is too strong the consequences can be toxic.

Yet as long as such a need can be easily contained within normal boundaries, it can help us to grow, to build relationships and support others...'





Henry Morrison, a committed missionary, had dedicated his life to spreading the gospel in China. After many years of sacrifice and dedication, at last it was time for him to take a well-deserved break and return home to the United States. The sea voyage was long and exhausting but Morrison kept his spirits up by focusing on the joy of seeing his family and friends after such a long time. As the ship finally came into harbour there was a great celebration. The sound of a gun salute reverberated and there was a great crowd of people on the quayside. Roosevelt, the President of the United States was welcomed off the ship with great pomp and jubilation and was greeted by the enthusiastic crowd. Flags waved and resplendent banners said, "Welcome home, Mr President". Yet while Morrison still stood on the deck of the ship and looked out on the quayside, he was gripped by a feeling of loneliness and self-pity. The anticipation of reunion with his loved ones gave way to sorrow. Nobody was waiting for him; nobody was celebrating his arrival and no flags were waving for him. He felt forgotten and unloved.

In this moment as dark thoughts threatened to overwhelm him, he found comfort in a still, small voice. This voice reminded him that his true home was not in this world. Whispering softly to him, it said: "But this is not your homeland."

These words sank deep into his heart and opened his eyes to the truth. Henry Morrison understood that his home was in heaven with his Lord and Saviour. The loneliness and disappointment faded in the light of this knowledge.

From this day onwards Henry Morrison served with an even greater devotion in China, knowing that an eternal reward with God was waiting for him. This particular moment on the ship stayed with him as a constant reminder that what really mattered was not the recognition and praise from this world but rather the love and acceptance of God in his true home.

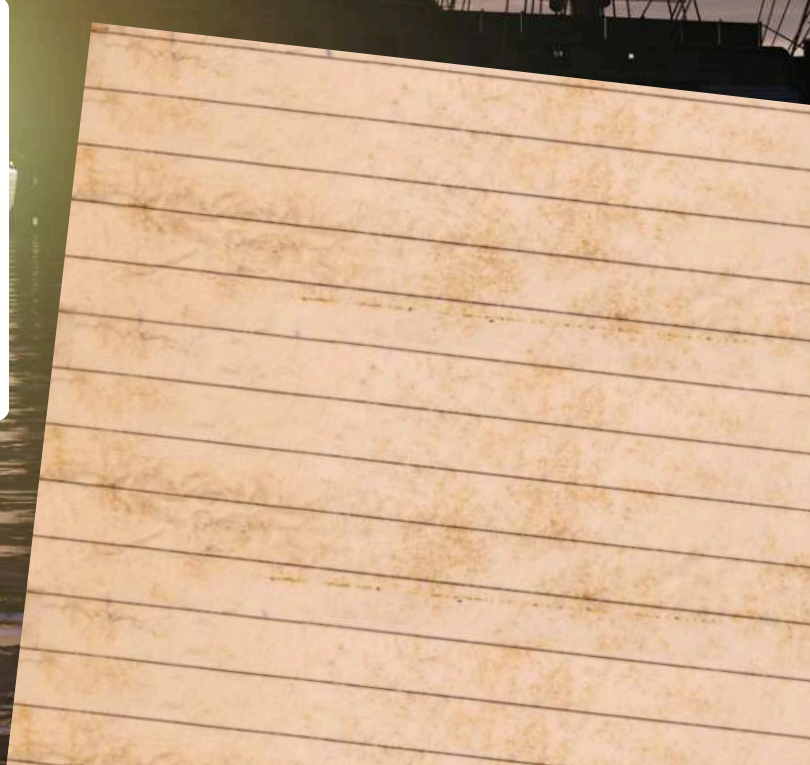
At the beginning of this booklet, we read about Abraham and his test of faith. Now at the end, we would like to take a fresh look at Abraham and consider his eternal perspective.

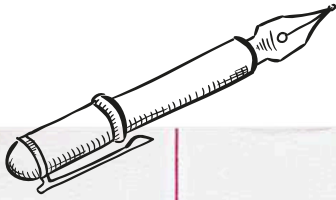
Read Hebrews 11:1-16.

Our true country, our real home, is in heaven. Don't imagine heaven as a boring place, rather as a lively city full of joy, excitement and worship. Here on earth, we are like guests or visitors. And we're waiting to receive our promised place in heaven. Sometimes it's important to think about the fact that we shouldn't expect too much from this earthly life. For example, perhaps we think everything in our lives should be right, fair and prosperous but it isn't. We don't always get what we want.

1. Why is it emphasised that those who die in faith have a hope of heaven?

2. Today, how can we strengthen our faith in a future heavenly home?





#mynotes

