



# ONCE UPON A TIME WITH GOD

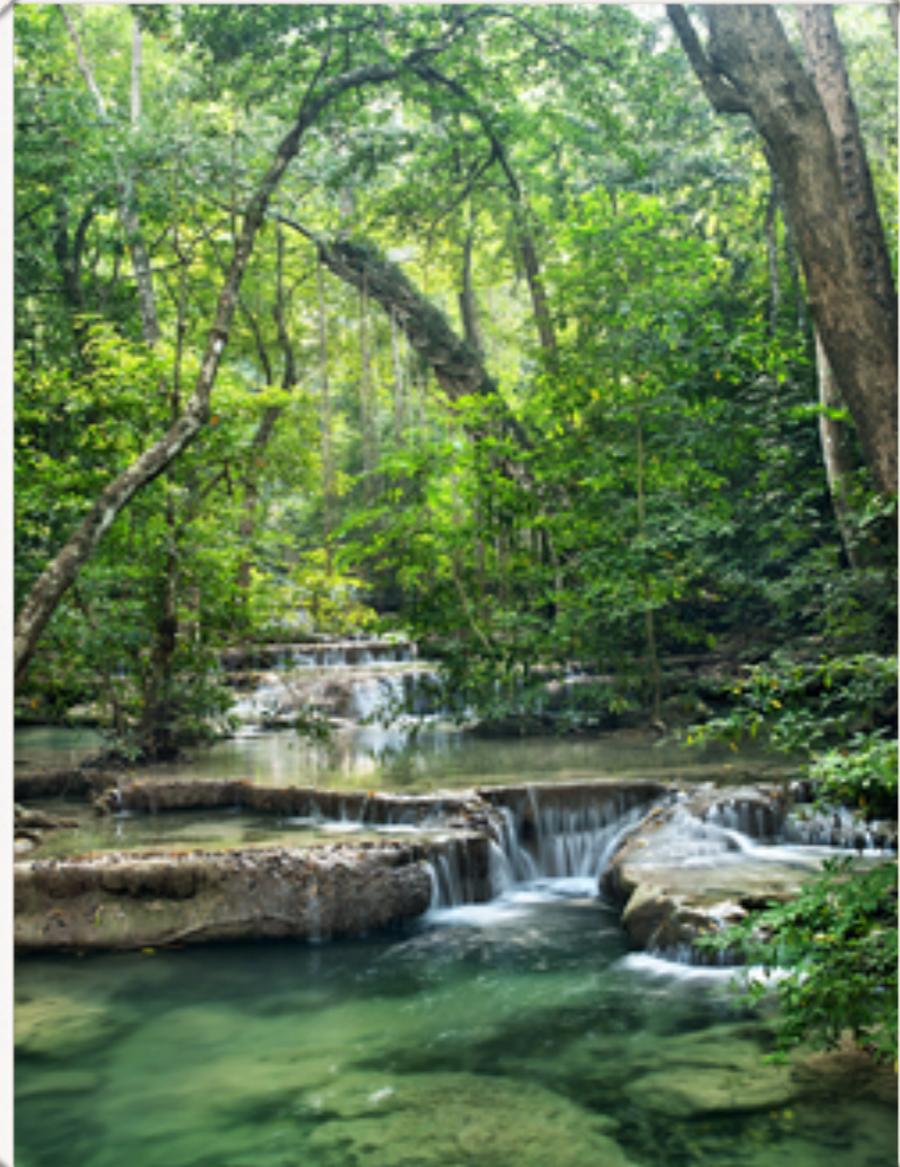
A STORY TO READ TO THE CHILD IN YOU

BY JANET NEWBERRY

# ONCE UPON A TIME...

*... a boy lived in a garden with his  
Father.*

*His Father loved him very much.*



*The Father created beauty and purpose and delight and rest and inspiration and mystery; He gave these good gifts to His boy.*

*The Father spent time with His son; He gave him good work to do. The boy cared for the living things in the garden. He found delight in the animals; he gave them each their own name.*

*Just like his Father, the boy found great joy in his work; he found greater joy in their time together. "It's good to be me here with You," the boy said.*



WHAT WE  
BELIEVE  
DETERMINES

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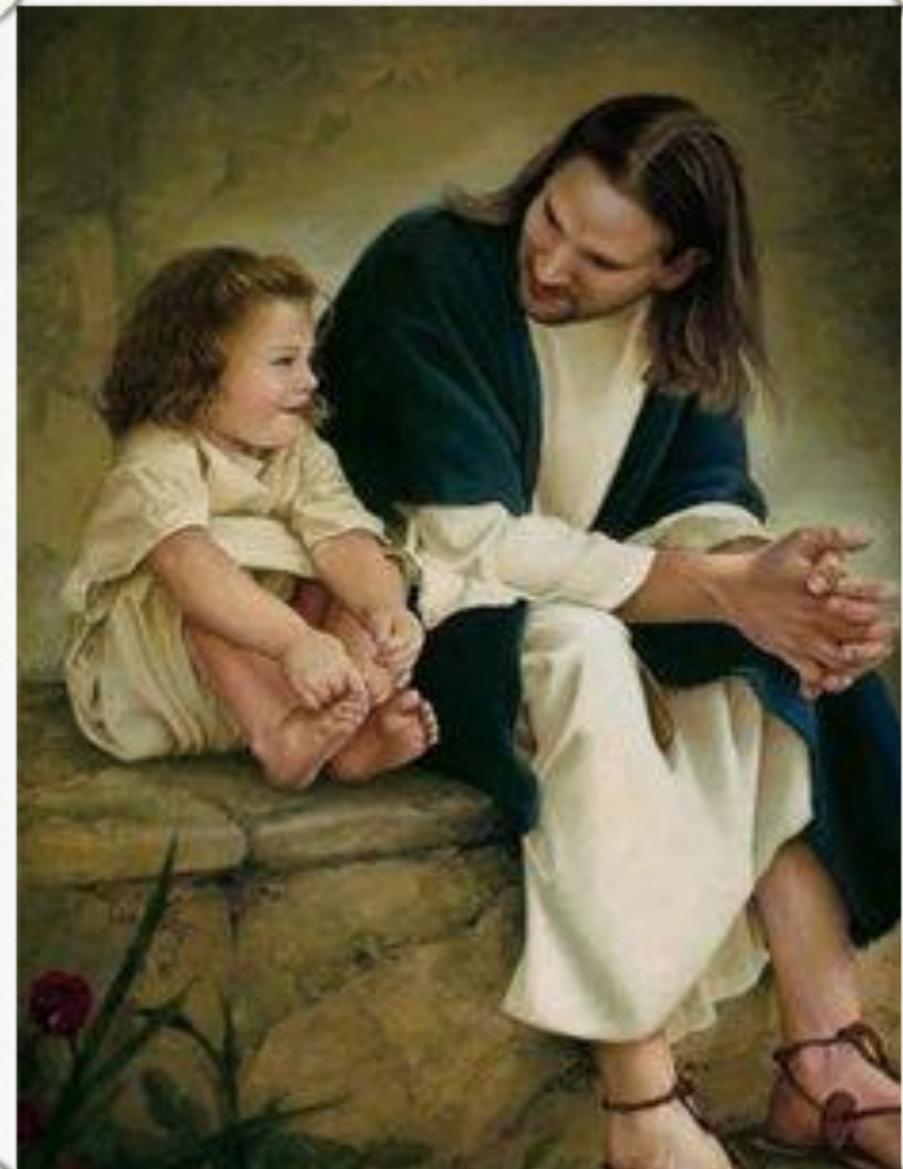
HOW WE  
LIVE.



# ONE DAY THE FATHER...

*... told the boy about two trees in the garden - both of which bore abundant fruit.*

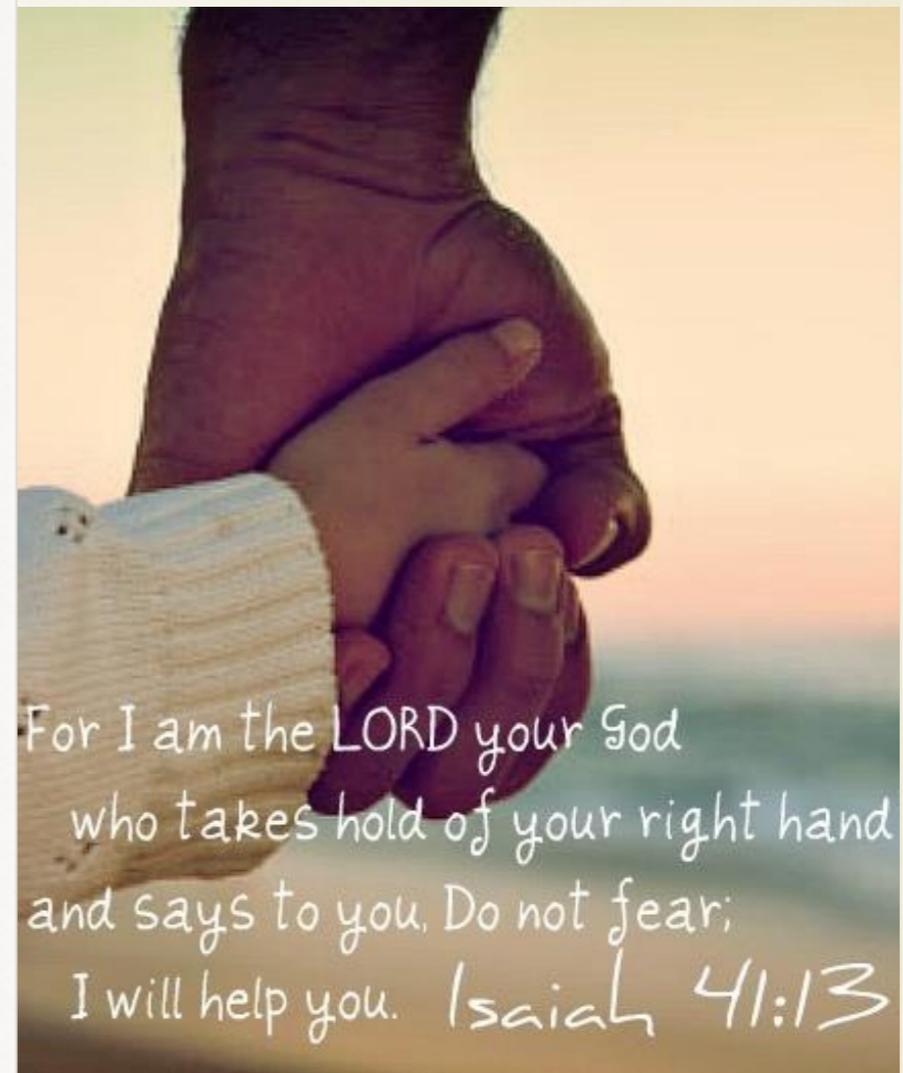
*The boy learned the name of the life-giving tree; His Father called it the Trust Me tree. The Father said the boy could eat as much fruit from this tree as he wanted. He said this fruit would help the boy grow strong and wise; this Trust Me fruit would help the boy grow up.*



# THEN THE FATHER...

*... showed his son the other tree, the boy's young eyes saw the fruit less clearly - and more beautifully - than His Father's eyes. The son heard the Father say the beauty of this fruit was a trick. The Father called this tree the Be Good Tree - and warned the boy not to eat it.*

*“If you trust the deceptive beauty of this Be Good Tree, you will open the door to a great curse. The curse will create chaos and pain and sickness of every kind. The curse breathes an invisible gas of shame; the curse smells like fear. The curse brings death.”*



For I am the LORD your God  
who takes hold of your right hand  
and says to you, Do not fear;  
I will help you. Isaiah 41:13

*With His arm around His boy the Father said, “Trust Me,” reminding His son about the life-giving tree.*

*The Father declared only one thing “not good” in the garden. “It is not good for My son to be alone.”*

*The Father knew the boy needed someone to love; the boy was created in the image of the Father. Love was the family name.*

*Alone was the only danger.*

*When the boy was alone, there was no one he could trust to help him or protect him. When he was alone, there was no one for him to love.*

*The Father knew His boy would always stay a boy without the love of another. He knew His boy would always stay a boy without loving another.*

*The Father also knew His son needed to learn to build; the boy needed to learn to build trust. Trust was the family trade.*

*Trust is the art and science of connecting - and reconnecting.*

*It's why the tree of life was named the "Trust Me" tree; trust builds a connection that allows love to flow freely.*

# ONE DAY THE FATHER...

*... put the boy in a deep sleep; He took a rib from His son - as a gift to His daughter.*

*“Even in her design - you protect her heart, My son,” He whispered to His sleeping boy.*

*When he awoke from the deep sleep, the son knew more than ever the heart of His Father. He experienced love in a new and mysterious way.*

*“She’s so beautiful, Abba. You give the best gifts. Thank you Father.”*

*“Enjoy loving her well, My son.”*

*“Enjoy loving him well, My daughter.”*



*The boy showed the girl all the beauty and purpose and delight and rest and inspiration and mystery in the garden.*

*He showed her the animals; he introduced them by name.*

*The serpent showed himself to be selfish and deceitful - unworthy of trust.*

*He saw the girl admiring the fruit of the Be Good Tree and he knew her young eyes could be easily tricked.*

*Young eyes can't see clearly into the distance of the future; young eyes only see what looks good right now.*

*The boy saw it all; it happened so quickly.*

*The girl ate of the fruit; she gave him some, too.*

*At once he knew.*

*The invisible gas of shame; the smell of fear.*

*In their fear and shame they did something they'd never done  
before - they hid from the Father.*

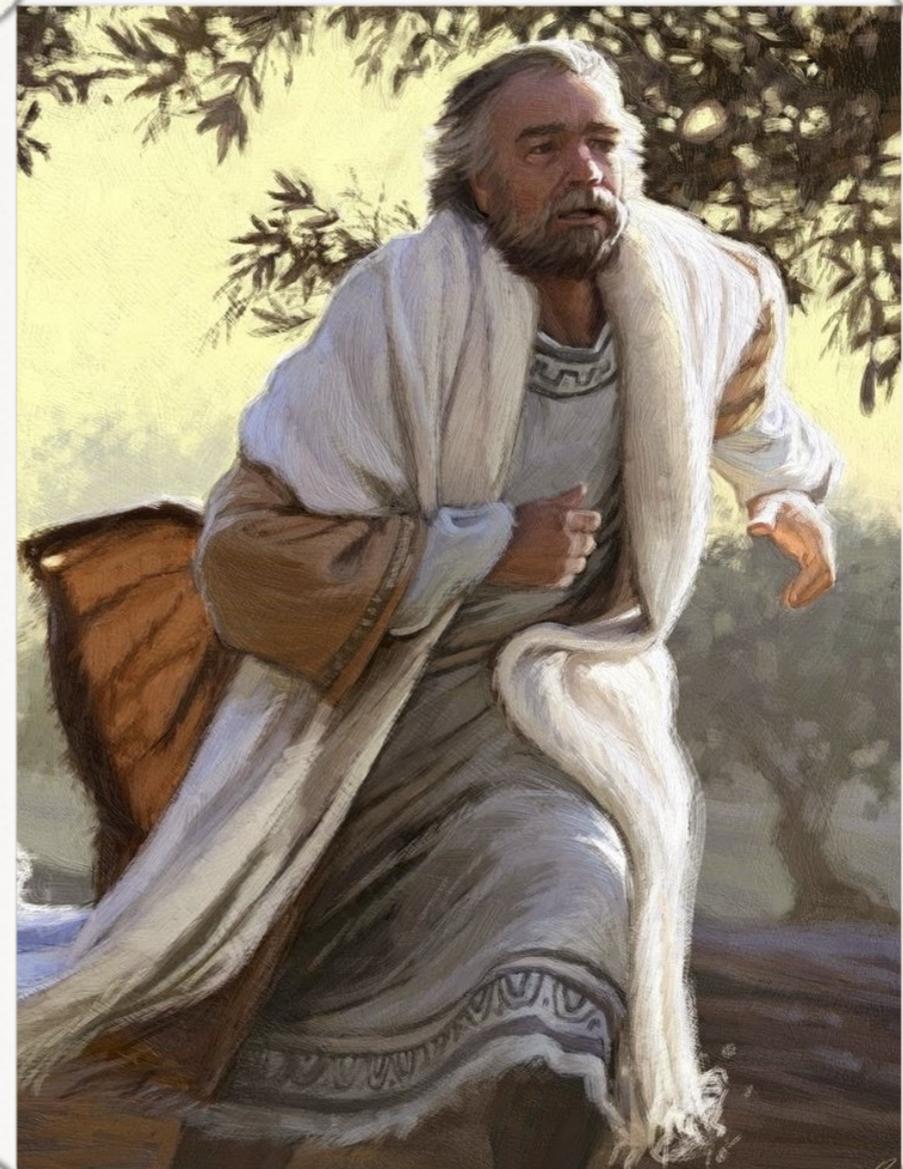
# BECAUSE HE LOVED THEM...

*... the Father came looking for His children. He knew they were in trouble; if they trusted Him - He could help.*

*The Father longed to reconnect; he longed for their trust again - or they'd never receive His love.*

*He found His hiding children - ashamed and afraid.*

*“Will you tell me what happened?”  
He asked the boy.*



*The story sounded nothing like trust and love - they spoke only in blame and shame.*

*The Father recognized the effects of the curse - His children were already learning its new language.*

*The Father took the life of an animal and made a covering for their shame; He said their plan for hiding it would never work.*

# HE HELD THEM CLOSE...

*... and looked deep into their eyes and spoke as softly and as strongly as they had ever heard Him speak. "Only I can handle sin and shame; please remember this truth. The world will need to know."*

*The boy and the girl trusted the Father and accepted His gift; they wore the covering He offered for their shame - even as they felt the deepening sickness of the curse.*



*The curse ended the nature of love in the boy and the girl; their new nature was sin.*

*The Father knew they were going to die. Sin always brings death.*

*The Father's love longed to protect them, so He guarded them from the tree of life.*

*If they ate of it now, they would exist apart from Him forever. He didn't want this hell for them.*

*He told them what to expect - now that they were dying. "This is as bad as it seems, but it won't last forever," He promised.*

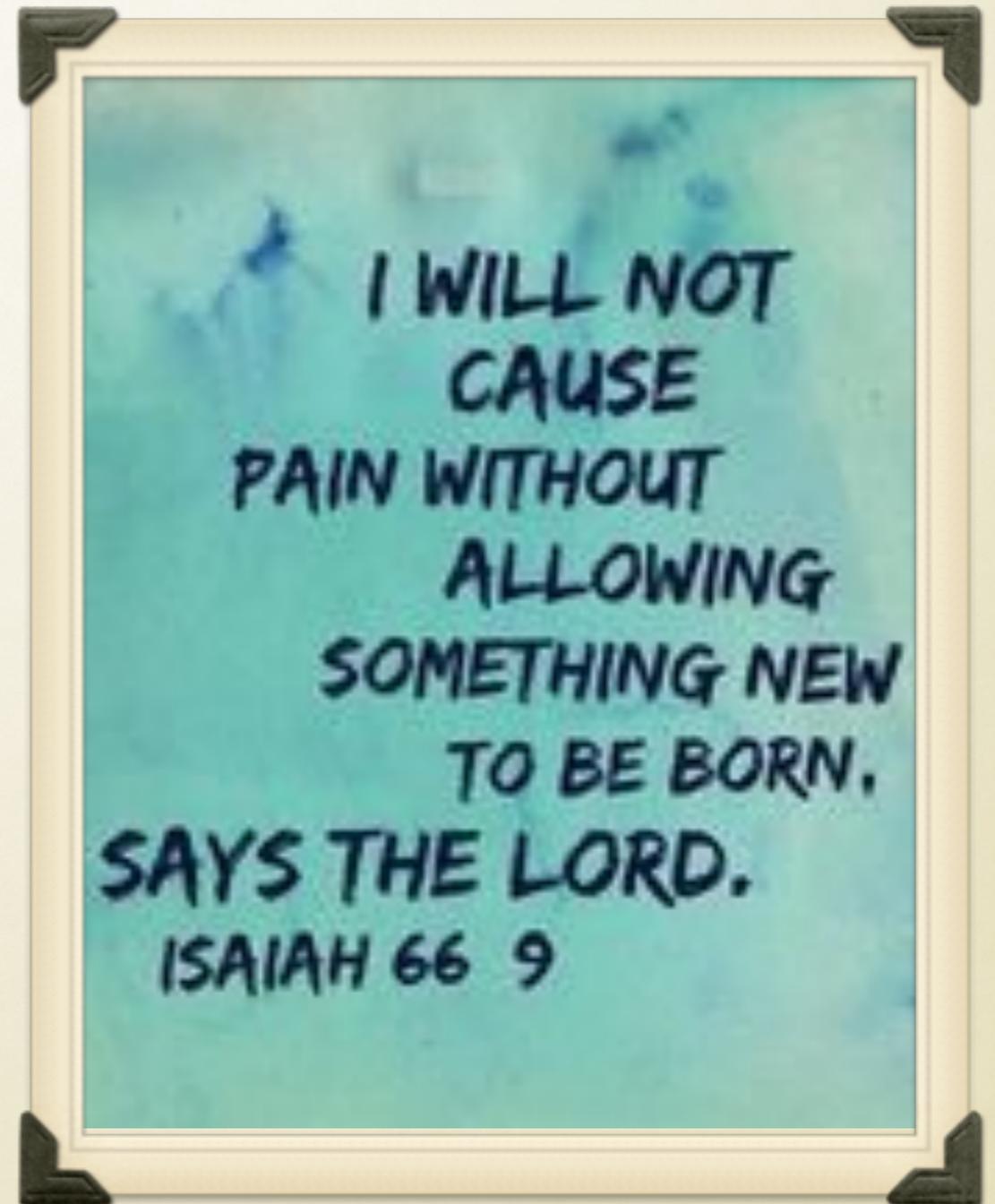
*To His daughter, He said, "Your sickness will bring pain in the places of your greatest tenderness. You will experience agony giving birth to your children. You will experience great confusion and suffering in your marriage."*

*To His son, He said, "The curse has replaced peace with chaos in the places you were created to rule; the curse has made the earth and all that is in it sick, too. You will find the evidence in thorns and thistles; you will experience great struggle and agony in your work."*

# THEY HEARD THE FATHER...

*... tell the serpent, “You will crawl on your belly and eat dust every day of your life. I will put hostility between your children and Mine. You will hurt them, yes. But a child of My daughter will kill you - forever.”*

*The girl’s heart found hope in the promise of her destiny - a seed from her womb would one day restore the family name of Love.*

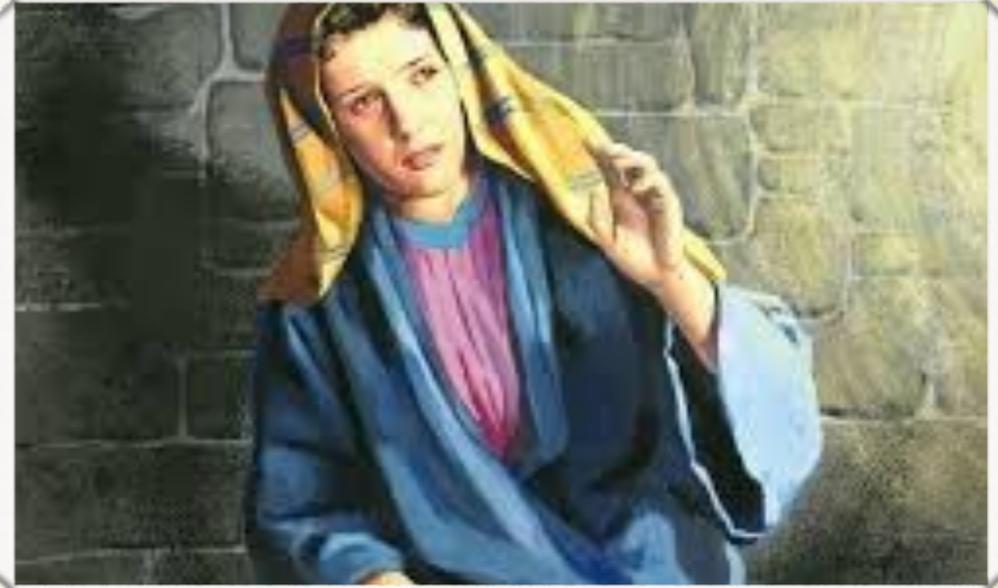


*For thousands of years, hope hung in the air - spoken in the words and stories told by the children that were the generations born after the boy and girl.*

*The hopeful held hands through centuries of darkness; hope is the seed of trust.*

*When the time was right, the Father planted the promised seed of Love in the womb of a girl - a very grand daughter of the first. "Trust Me," He said.*

BLESSED IS SHE  
WHO HAS BELIEVED  
THAT THE LORD  
WOULD FULFILL HIS  
PROMISES TO HER.  
luke 1:45



*“I trust You,” she said.*



*The Son recognized the curse,  
just as His Father had  
described.*

*He experienced the thorns; He  
experienced the agony.*

*There was another tree. “Trust  
Me,” said the Father.*



# THE SUFFERING BROKE HIS HEART...

*- and love burst forth.*

*Love dealt with shame.*

*Love cast out fear.*

*“Welcome home, My child.”*



*“Love one another, My son.”*

*“Love one another, My daughter.”*

*“Trust Me,” says the Father.*

*“I trust You,” said the Son.*