

# Poetry of Carol Blomberg



An Introduction :

Hello! My name is Carol Blomberg. I came to faith in Yeshua a little over four years ago. It was at this time the Lord called me to intercessory prayer and although I am not Jewish, the Lord supernaturally placed in my heart a great love for Israel, the Jewish people and an overwhelming hunger to seek out my Christian Jewish roots. As an intercessor, the Lord began to show me his great love for Israel, His beloved, and through symbolism began to speak to me about the church and His desire for healing to come between the two. "His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility." (Ephesians 2:15-16)

In Yeshua's Great Love,

Carol Blomberg

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## The Voice

I walked away numb inside, not knowing what had happened and I heard the voice of one offended say, "How dare they treat me this way."

I fell asleep wondering why they said what they said and I heard someone weeping cry out, "I wish I were dead."

I sat confused not knowing what to do and I heard a low voice say, "They don't care about you."

I lay in my bed as my heart ached and I heard an angry voice yell, "They'll never do this to me again."

I went about my work, my mind churning and I heard a voice proclaim bitterly, "They are so unkind."

I went to church, my spirit wounded and I heard someone whisper, "Never come back."

I looked to see where this voice was coming from, but saw nothing in the pitch black.

I went to my knees and a great light came my way.

It was then that I saw the profile of a snake slithering away.

And another small, still voice said, "I love you."

## THE KING'S GIFT

By Carol Blomberg

The king, whose palace was far from his many provinces, had determined to make a visit to each of his provinces by the end of the year. He declared that at the completion of his journey he would award the province of his choosing with a special gift. There was one province in particular that had particularly pleased him. So he made a decision to send his royal messenger to deliver his chosen gift to the province in the east.

The people of this province all gathered around the royal messenger with great anticipation and excitement as he unveiled the gift before the expectant crowd. The messenger announced that the gift was for the province of the east first and foremost, but that they were to share it graciously and eagerly with the other provinces.

There was an array of mixed responses that came forth from the crowd as the gift, a silver trumpet, was revealed to them. Some of the people looked on in disbelief. Surely the king would not have sent such a simple, plain gift as this? Of what use or of what good was a small, silver trumpet?

They accused the messenger of being an imposter and they ascertained that the real gift was certainly, still yet to be delivered. Others in the crowd ahhed and oohed as they marveled at the gift. They watched as it sparkled brightly in the noon day sun.

One of the admirers began to play it. The beautiful notes began to draw all those within earshot. However, the people who did not believe the king had sent the gift plugged their ears and left in disgust. Many others stayed and many more were drawn by the beautiful music. As the music continued, something amazing began to happen. Some of the people who had been crippled their entire lives stood up and began to dance. Others who were deaf or blind, suddenly proclaimed that they could hear and see and they, too, began to rejoice.

Word of the silver trumpet quickly spread to the other provinces. People from the northern, southern, and western provinces began to make pilgrimages to the province of the east, just to listen to the silver trumpet. Some who made the journey were cynical when they saw the trumpet,

but when the music began to flow out of it they were captivated. Many of these pilgrims were healed and many miracles occurred among them.

Soon it seemed that there were more people from the other provinces coming to play and listen to the trumpet than there were people from the province of the east playing and listening. Those in the east who did not believe the trumpet came from the king wielded great power and influence and they dissuaded many from playing or listening to the silver trumpet.

The other provinces longed to take the silver trumpet back to their people, in order that they, too, might share in its beauty. The people of the east willingly and graciously gave their consent and even helped bring the silver trumpet to the other provinces. Those in the east who were still awaiting the king's true gift to arrive, gladly said good riddance to the silver trumpet and openly made it known that they hoped it would never be returned.

The people of the other provinces were astounded at the trumpet's beautiful music and many miracles occurred as it was played.

Time passed and when the people of the east came to the other provinces to play and listen to the trumpet they were dismayed to find that the people of the other provinces had made a rule that only a person belonging to their particular province could play and listen to the silver trumpet. Some of the people that came from the east so wanted to play and listen to the trumpet that they left behind family and friends and moved to the province where the trumpet was at, never to return to the east. Others that came from the east were torn as to what to do and sadly returned to the east without hearing or playing the silver trumpet.

Soon no one from the eastern provinces were traveling to hear or see the trumpet and the people of the other provinces began to bicker over which province should get the trumpet. Each province began to make up a long list of tedious rules about how long each province should be allowed to keep the trumpet, who should be allowed to play the trumpet, what that person should be allowed to wear, when the trumpet should be played, and which notes were acceptable and which notes were unacceptable.

A strange thing began to happen. The shiny, silver trumpet began to lose its radiance and its surface became extremely dull. An unusual rust began to appear that was impossible to remove. When the trumpet was played, it no longer sounded the same. There were no longer cripples leaping up and dancing for joy on their healed limbs and the blind and deaf who came to listen and see, left the same way, blind and deaf.

Nevertheless, the provinces continued to make more and more rules concerning the trumpet. Each province implemented lavish plans to erect a cathedral to house the trumpet for when it was their turn to host it. They began to compete against one another to see who could build the largest and most grandiose cathedral. Before long, a rule was put into effect that only

specially trained people from the cathedral were allowed to play the trumpet and it was required that anyone wanting to listen to the trumpet must buy a ticket from the cathedral.

Soon people began to forget what the trumpet used to sound like. The leaders from the cathedral began to bring in other trumpets and instruments to be played along-side the trumpet.

Eventually, the trumpet was rarely played at all and more often than not, it was just put on display behind a glass case in the cathedral and the other instruments were played for the people's entertainment. However, the bickering and competition between the provinces as to who should have the trumpet was in no way lessened.

The time came when the king decided to once again visit all of his many provinces. Upon visiting the province of the east he was surprised and shocked to find that very few people could even recall the gift he had sent to them following his previous visit. He was astonished to learn that the majority of the people had never even believed that the silver trumpet had been a gift from the king.

With a mixture of sadness and kingly anger, the king continued his journey to the other provinces determined to find out what had become of his silver trumpet. The king's royal informants notified the king that the trumpet was currently residing in his western province.

Upon arriving there, he was ushered by the people of the province to a huge, immaculate cathedral that housed the trumpet. With great excitement and even greater pride, the leaders of the cathedral wheeled a glass case before the king and removed the covering off the case.

In utter shock the king looked unbelievably at what appeared to be an old, disfigured trumpet. The rust had completely taken over the exterior of the trumpet and it did not resemble in any way the gift he had long ago given to the people of the eastern province. The king ordered the glass case removed and he picked up the trumpet to look at it. He reached to put it to his lips to play it when the cathedral personnel informed the king that only a trained professional from the cathedral was allowed to play the trumpet. A crowd had formed by now and many gasps could be heard among those present in response to what had been spoken to the king.

The king could hardly believe his own ears and eyes. His wrath had surely been kindled, thought the onlooking crowd. The king turned his face away from the group of people and once more gazed upon the trumpet. On the inside lip of the trumpet there was a small portion that was still untouched by the rust. Upon that small portion was the king's own insignia. A tear dropped from the king's eye and landed on the trumpet.

The king called one of his royal servants to his side and began to speak to him. Then he exited the cathedral with his royal entourage. The king's

servant turned to face the leaders of the cathedral.

The severity of their offense had suddenly dawned on them. A great fear overcame the leaders and they felt certain their fate was in the balance. The servant told them they were to immediately return the trumpet to the province of the east. Before he left, he handed them a copy of the original decree that had been issued when the trumpet had been originally given to the people of the east. It very simply read:

The silver trumpet is for the people of the eastern province first  
and the peoples of  
of the other provinces secondly.

The king's servant left and the cathedral leaders sighed a great sigh of relief. They realized that they had truly been recipients of the king's mercy on this day. They began to discuss among themselves the king's decree to return the trumpet.

Suddenly, as if a veil was removed from their eyes, they looked at the trumpet and began to weep as they realized that the cathedral and all its trappings had literally taken the trumpet's place. There were still a few among them who could recall the miraculous things that had happened in the early days of the trumpet. What had they done? They were overcome with extreme grief. Would the people of the east ever be able to forgive them, they asked among themselves? They made plans to return the trumpet as soon as possible.

So it was. The trumpet was returned to the province of the east. The king, too, had returned to the east to await the trumpet's return and had told the people of the east that indeed the silver trumpet he had sent years ago had truly been from him all along. The people who had refused to believe all those years, wept when they realized how their unbelief had caused them to reject the silver trumpet and its beautiful music. Those that had believed all along rejoiced as they anticipated the soon return of the trumpet to the land.

When the trumpet arrived, even those that had seen it in the early days found it extremely challenging to believe that it was the same silver trumpet. However, the king assured them that it was indeed the gift he had given them so long ago. The people of the east began to play it.

A wonderful and amazing thing happened when the trumpet was once again played back in the land. The rust that had completely enveloped it, disappeared, and the radiance and lustre returned to its exterior. The people commented that the glory of the silver trumpet was even greater than it had been formerly. Once again beautiful music began to flow out of the

silver trumpet and the peoples from the other provinces streamed to the east to come up to listen to its beautiful notes. There was absolutely no sickness or infirmity among any of the people. Even the land rejoiced as areas that had been barren began to bloom with life and where there had once been desert, streams began to flow freely. Incredibly, even the animals did not go untouched by the silver trumpet and its music. The lion could be seen lying peacefully with the lamb. Even small children could be seen playing safely with vipers. The land and its people and all the peoples of the surrounding provinces entered into a great rest.

## THE BAKERY

By Carol Blomberg

There once was a very wealthy man who bought two bakeries in his home town. He often traveled very extensively outside of the country. Leaving a detailed plan of how he wanted the bakeries to be run, he hired two separate managers to oversee each bakery and left the bakeries in their care.

While the owner was out of the country, the first manager came up with what he believed was a brilliant, time-saving, energy-efficient, money-making venture. The manager decided that he would start a bakery unlike any other bakery. A bakery that didn't bake. This bakery would buy freshly harvested stalks of grain and sell them. After all, he would save on many costs since he wouldn't have to pay for laborers to work at the bakery and since there would be no laborers he wouldn't need any equipment and since there would be no equipment there wouldn't be much of a cost for maintenance.

So with much excitement and without the owner's consent the manager of this bakery opened the doors of the bakery. He had stalks of grain all over the store. Outside of the store he had tables set up steeped high with stalks. Some people walked by the tables without even glancing. Some looked at the stalks and laughed, others looked away in disgust. Some mistook the stalks of grain for some other kind of plant. Others had no idea what kind of plants they were walking by and were too embarrassed to inquire. While others thought they were to be used for decorations in their homes. Some of the people purchased the stalks because they had never seen a stalk of grain and they wanted to show their children. A small minority of people who made bread at home, bought the stalks thinking it would be cheaper to grind up their

own flour to make their own bread. However, after trying this a couple times they decided it was too ##### and required much more effort than just going to the store and purchasing flour. Some people who were walking by would stop just to talk with the manager because they were lonely and some of these even bought a stalk or two thinking that if they did the manager might be

their friend. Some people, thinking grain stalks might become the next hottest fad, bought some just to get a head start. A few bought some stalks thinking they might be able to invent a new use for them. However, overall, the number of people who actually purchased any stalks at all was very low.

The manager pondered the lack of sales. He had an idea. Advertisement, he thought to himself, that's what this bakery needs. He decided people just needed to be informed. So he went about putting ads in the paper and signs around town and in his bakery window. He even made up a pamphlet educating

the people about the grain stalks. Excitedly, he waited for the people to respond. The first week more people did start to show up but the majority of people merely looked without buying.

The manager was only disappointed for a short while, however, because he came up with what he now thought was absolutely the answer to his sales problem. Packaging, of course, why had he not thought of that before. So, he determined to put his stalks in colorful, eye-catching, creative and elaborate packaging styles to draw and catch the people's attention. Irresistible!

Sure enough, the beautiful packaging did seem to bring more people into the store and some even made purchases simply for the novelty of such an item but they never returned to buy more. Many more ahhed and oooed at the creative packaging but most left the store without buying anything.

The manager was starting to become frustrated when he suddenly had what he thought to be the absolute solution to his sales problem. Prizes, games for the kids, balloons, treats, that's what this bakery needs, he thought to himself. So the next Saturday with everything in place he opened his doors and sure enough he had never had so many people in the little bakery. Parents and children, children and parents.

This really was the solution! However, at the end of the day when he checked his sales he was astonished to find that out of all of those people that had come in and out of the bakery all day, very few had actually bought anything.

Meanwhile, on the other side of town, the manager of the second bakery followed the owner's instructions carefully and quickly set about buying the necessary equipment and hiring laborers. He hired laborers to separate the grain from the stalks, others to grind the grain into flour, others were hired to mix the flour and bake the bread. It required much of the owner's money and a great sacrifice of time and energy on the part of the manager to instruct and teach the laborer's how to make the bread. He also had to allot enough time for the laborers to learn to work in unity with one another.

The day came when they opened their doors to the public. Initially, it

was the delectable smell of the bread that brought the first customers running. The bread, freshly baked each day, had the most pleasing aroma and the people found it to be as delicious and satisfying as it smelled. These customers told their friends and family members who came and in their excitement, they in turn told their friends and co-workers. The customers were very faithful and returned again and again finding the bread irresistible. The bakery workers were very busy but they loved making bread and working with each other and they loved each and every customer. They loved the neighborhood people so much they even set aside bread to give away to those in the neighborhood that could not afford to buy any bread, so that no one had to go without.

Soon the bakery became so popular that people in other towns began to drive great distances to buy the delicious bread and within a short time the manager found that he needed to add on to the building, hire more laborers and buy more equipment.

One day the owner of the two bakeries flew back into the country and unexpectedly showed up at the first bakery. He was shocked to see that his bakery wasn't a bakery at all. He confronted the manager and demanded that the manager give a full account of what he had been doing with the bakery. The manager pleaded with the owner to calm down as he explained how much money he had saved the owner by not buying any equipment or hiring any laborers. The manager explained that though he had not had much success in selling the stalks of grain, he was certain the people were sure to be coming around soon. The owner demanded to look at the book work. He saw that though the manager had not had to buy equipment nor hire laborers he had spent a fortune on advertisement, packaging, balloons and prizes but had sold very few stalks. The owner, furious, fired the incompetent manager on the spot and determined to quickly go to his second bakery across town.

As he walked up to the building he immediately noticed how much larger it looked compared to when he had last seen it. The next thing that caught his attention was the long line of customers waiting to get inside to buy bread. Walking past the customers into the bakery the owner noticed the phone seemed to ring nonstop as people called in from all over to place orders for bread.

Finally, the manager looked up and was astonished to see the owner silently observing everything. The manager was very surprised to see the owner so soon and he jumped over the counter to greet the owner excitedly, shaking his hand. The owner wanted to meet all of the laborers first, so the manager took him around the bakery to introduce the owner to everybody. Then the manager began to explain how he had followed the owner's instructions carefully and as a result the bakery had

become extremely successful. The owner was elated with the manager and the laborers. He immediately informed everyone that they would be getting a huge bonus and a raise and he put the manager in charge of opening two more bakeries in a town nearby.

## The Royal Foxhounds and the Mixed-Breed By Carol Blomberg

The king, his son the prince, and some of the servants determined to spend the day fox hunting. There was a fox on the loose that was wreaking havoc in the king's kingdom and the king wanted him brought down. The king had imported the best trained foxhounds in the entire land for the job, but this fox had so far outwitted them all.

Arising early in the morning, and mounted on their royal steeds, they set out into the surrounding forest. Rather early in the hunt, the royal dogs sounded as if they had come to a standstill up ahead. They could be heard barking and growling frantically. The royal entourage was quite pleased, assuming that the dogs already had the fox at bay.

To their surprise, when the group reached the top of the summit, they were disappointed to see that their royal foxhounds had surrounded a sickly-looking, helpless, stray, female dog and her 3 young pups. The king was certain this was a dog which belonged to one of the peasants in the nearby village. All of the dogs that belonged to the peasants were all half-wild. The king was nearly ready to give the order to shoot the mother and her pups because he was convinced that wild dogs were useless.

Suddenly, he had an idea. He decided to be merciful and let the mother and two of her pups go, but with a large smile on his face he picked up the scrawniest of her puppies and handed this pup to his son. The son was rather surprised and he looked questioningly back and forth from his father to the puppy. The king proclaimed that he wanted his son to make this pup into a fox hunter. The king explained that the best foxhounds in all the kingdom had failed in their calling, so why not train a stray dog for the task? The royal foxhounds had grown careless and disobedient, the king ascertained. The king continued to smile at his son and ordered the royal hunting party and his royal foxhounds back to the palace and called it a day.

The son knew his father had given him an immense challenge. How was he going to make a stray mongrel of a dog into a foxhound? This was no ordinary fox they had been trying to track down. This fox had proven to be a formidable foe and had evaded them again and again. However, the son loved his father greatly and he enjoyed challenges. So for the joy set before him, he began to plan his strategy.

The prince decided he was going to raise this pup different than all of the other royal dogs he had ever had. He was going to allow her to be raised right in the king's palace.

So it was. The little ball of fur was allowed to be seated right beside the king's table. She was served her meals on a small silver platter right at the prince's feet. She even slept in the prince's chambers at night and accompanied the prince everywhere he went. Surprisingly, the small, rather homely-looking critter began to capture the heart of the king and his son.

The prince brought in a man who was known as the best trainer, teacher, and dog councilor in the entire kingdom. The prince's helper began to work with the mixed-breed pup day and night. In the meantime, the fox continued on his path of destruction, killing and destroying that which was not his and he continued to allude all who attempted to capture him.

The king's royal foxhounds looked on in disdain as they watched the mongrel being trained day after day. Was it not they who were the king's royal hunters, chosen from the finest stock, the purest of blood-lines? How could this funny looking mixed-breed ever amount to anything, they thought, let alone overcome the crafty fox?

Neither the prince nor his helper ever seemed to become discouraged at the dog's lack of natural talent. Everyday the prince's helper continued to instruct the dog with the utmost patience, self-control, and love, because the little one had captured his heart, as well. He would spend a portion of each day meticulously grooming the mixed-breed, taking great care to groom every inch of the dog's coat. As the days passed into weeks, the mixed-breed's dirty, mangled coat began to blossom into a beautiful, luxurious coat of shining fur.

The time came for the mixed-breed to go hunting with the son. The royal foxhounds growled as the royal hunting party passed by on their way out to the forest. They were astounded at how beautiful and graceful the mixed-breed looked as she trotted at the son's side. The royal foxhounds were certain the hunting party would come back completely empty-handed. They were wrong.

The royal hunting party returned with not one, but with two foxes. The royal foxhounds whined and barked loudly as the son and the mixed-breed pranced by them with the fruit of their hunt laying limp and lifeless in the prince's hands. It was quickly confirmed that neither of these foxes were the notorious fox that had brought such turmoil to the king's kingdom, but never the less, the mixed-breed had proven herself above and beyond everyone's expectations. The foxhounds were consumed with jealousy. How they wanted to get back to the hunt.

The king smiled with pleasure as he watched his royal foxhounds look on

with such envy at the mixed-breed. The mixed-breed had accomplished more than just becoming a proficient fox hunter. She had invoked the jealousy of the king's foxhounds and had rekindled in them a great desire to hunt once again, which was precisely what the king had desired to do. Tomorrow, the king shared, the mixed-breed and the royal foxhounds would hunt together as one.

Early the next morning the prince brought the mixed-breed and the king brought the royal foxhounds together for the hunt. The royal foxhounds were so eager for the hunt, they displayed no reservations at all about including the mixed-breed.

That day proved to be a fateful day for the crafty fox. It was to be his last day to walk the earth. The king had never seen such zeal in his royal foxhounds. Neither the mixed-breed nor the royal foxhounds had been successful in capturing the fox alone, but together they worked in magnificent unity to track the fox down and track him down they did. Within an hour the dogs had the fox at bay. The fox looked unusually small and helpless as he was surrounded by the barking dogs. It was hard to imagine that this pathetic creature was the same creature that had been responsible for bringing about so much death and destruction.

The king ordered his servants to destroy the fox and take him away. Then the king, the prince, and the entire royal hunting party returned to the palace. The king ordered that a huge celebration take place to celebrate the victory. The kingdom was free of foxes from that day forward!

## THE FROG AND THE ROCK

By Carol Blomberg

One day a father and his son were strolling through the woods. The sound of frogs calling out from a muddy pool of water just below the path they were on caught the father's attention and he pointed it out to his son. The son eagerly went down to investigate, and spotting a frog, he excitedly reached down and lifted the frog up out of the slimy pit. With the frog shielded carefully in his right hand, he climbed a large rock next to the pool and set the frog down gently on the rock.

When the frog finally opened his eyes, he began to blink again and again. He couldn't believe what he was seeing. He began to sing with joy. A new song came forth from his mouth, one he had never heard before. From this vantage point he could see trees; lots of magnificent trees, everywhere! Down below he had never noticed the trees. As he looked up he could see the beautiful blue sky with white fluffy clouds moving slowly above the tree

branches. He was amazed at all of the different kinds of birds atired in their varying plumage, flying from bush to bush, tree to tree. There were also many kinds of creatures, big and small, feathered and furry that he had never seen before. Some were climbing trees, some were scampering into holes

in the ground, others were hopping, some were chasing other creatures! In the smelly pit, there was never a breeze, but up here on the rock he could feel the cool, refreshing wind ##### across his entire body. The smell of the air was tantalizing and invigorating, which contrasted sharply with the stagnant stench of his home below.

Then he blinked again. He had to make sure that what he was looking at was really what it appeared to be, because sparkling in the distance, with the sun dancing off its shiny surface, was a beautiful river, clear as crystal! He also could see that a straight and narrow path led directly to the river. A river, he thought to himself, and to think, it had been there all along. He and the other frogs had spent their entire lives living in the dreary mud and the smelly mire, fighting over food and all the while a river of abundance was just beyond. The frog gazed upon all he saw in wonderment.

As the frog's body soaked up the sun's warm, inviting rays and the cool breeze continued to whisper in and out of the tree limbs, he began to think of how wonderful it would be to stay on top of the rock, just like this, forever. Then the thought of his family and friends still in the pit began to overwhelm him and he began to feel guilty for wanting to stay on the rock. Who would tell them about the river of life just beyond, who would show the way?

Suddenly, the father's voice could be heard calling for his son and the son gently, but firmly took the frog once again into his right hand. No, the frog thought, he did not want to leave the rock, just a little longer he thought to himself! The son carefully climbed down the large rock and returned the frog to the ground and the son returned to be with his father.

The frog was very saddened and distraught to be back. He knew that he could never stay in the slimy pit, not with the knowledge that there was a great river of life so near. He was once blind, but now he could see that the pit was no longer his home; his true home was to be found at the end of the level path he had seen from the rock. He also knew that he couldn't leave his brothers and sisters in the mud and mire. He would show them the way to the river.

He summoned all of the frogs to gather around him and he began to recount how the son had lifted him out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire and had set his feet on a rock, giving him a firm place to stand. The frog explained to them that no eye had seen, no ear had heard, no mind from the slimy pit had ever conceived what lay beyond that rock. The frog shared how he had seen a straight and narrow path that led to a beautiful river. He

told them of the new song he had sang while he was up there and that he would take them himself to the river and they could see for themselves all of the amazing things he had witnessed, since there were just too many to recount, too many to be numbered.

Many of the frogs trusted in what he was saying and they believed him. Some of the frogs, who so much wanted to believe, listened to the proud frogs, who replied that since they themselves had never seen such things, these things the frog spoke of could not be. Other frogs began to spread a lie that no son of man had ever been to the slimy pit and that the frog had never been set on a rock at all. Therefore, they declared, all these things he claimed to have seen and experienced he had surely made up. A few of the frogs came to the conclusion that if he had seen all of these marvelous things then surely he must be some kind of a god. They wanted to worship him. The frog assured them that he was certainly no god. Several of the frogs thought that they too would like to get to the top of the rock and started devising schemes of their own to get to the top, but the frog explained that only the son who had carried him up there could get them up there. There was no other way.

The frog was determined to take those who believed to the river. Oh, how he longed for everyone to come with him! If they could have seen what he had seen, they would all believe. However, it would take great faith to believe and follow him. The frog determined that they would leave in three days.

The third day arrived and the group said their goodbyes to much laughing and scoffing on the part of the proud ones. Many of the other frogs who were just too afraid to go, wept as they waved farewell to the group. Others were so indifferent, they didn't even lift their heads above the mire to see them off. Still there were those who were so busy devising their schemes to ascend the rock, they didn't even know the group was leaving.

Off the travelers went and their journey began. They found the beginning of the path quite easy going. As they journeyed along, they began to notice that there were other paths that veered off from the path they were on. The frog warned them that he had seen these crooked paths from the rock and that even though they looked like they were going in the same direction as the path they were on, they ultimately went away from the river.

The group had not been traveling long at all when, suddenly, two of the frogs who had been rather hesitant about leaving the mire declared that they missed their family and friends too much to go any further. These frogs decided they were going to go back to the familiarity of the muddy pool. It was all they had ever known, they asserted. The frog pleaded with them to go forward, reminding them of the glorious things ahead, and warned them of the dangers of returning alone. He tried desperately to explain to them that it was important that they all stay unified and move forward as one, but to no

avail. Along the way back, the two frogs got confused, and veered off on one of the crooked paths the frog had warned them about.

The shrill, loud cry of a bird of prey echoed throughout the forest. The frog had the group come to a standstill. He recalled that when he had stood on the rock, he had seen the powerful bird who made such a call. A shiver ran down his spine.

Unbeknownst to the group, the two who had left to return to the slimy pit had been plucked from the crooked path to their death. The last thing the two saw was the shadow of the bird and his sharp talons in their face as he swooped down and carried them away. The frogs back at the mire had heard the piercing cry of the bird, as well. However, their world was ##### with so many unidentified and unusual sounds that they had become quite accustomed to ignoring them.

Up ahead, the frog and his companions began moving forward along the main path once again. This path had looked so smooth from the vantage point of the rock, but now that they were actually traversing it, it was obvious that it was not as smooth as it had seemed from afar. They had come to a part of the path that was very, very rocky and it went through an open meadow that had no shade to escape the intense heat of the day, due to the lack of foliage. It felt like the sun was scorching their bodies and it took a great deal of effort on everyone's part to climb and hop up and over each rock along the way. Their progress was very slow.

As they became wearier and wearier there was much murmuring and complaining among the members of the group. Many began to discuss among themselves how good life had been back at the muddy pool. Oh, how they missed the slimy pit, they moaned. Food had always been available and plentiful there, they reminisced, though in fact, it had always been very scarce. The frog tried to convince them to forget about the slimy pit and tried to direct their thoughts to the wonderful and fruitful life ahead.

Slowly, the group struggled on until they came upon another path that veered off away from the main path they were on, and led to the east. When they looked down this other path they could see an inviting canopy of trees that enveloped it in thick shade. Three of the group even believed they could see a stream just a little bit further down this alternative path.

Those three members of the group immediately made up their minds that they were going to venture down the new path just for awhile. They assured the frog and the rest of the group that they would catch up to them later on after they had cooled themselves in the shade, and refreshed themselves in the stream they were confident they could see. The frog once again told them how important it was that they not swerve to the right nor to the left of the main path if they wanted to keep their foot from danger. He explained to them the necessity of remaining unified in their common goal to reach the

river.

The three frogs stubbornly refused to listen to the frog's wisdom. So the frog and the rest of the remaining group reluctantly bid them farewell and continued on the rocky path which became less and less rocky as the group progressed. Within a fairly short time, they reentered the refreshing shade of the forest, once again.

Meanwhile, the threesome made their way down the path leading to the east. The further down the path they went, they noticed it was becoming increasingly dark. It was getting more and more difficult to see with every hop. They could hear rustling in the grass next to them, but due to the lack of light along the path it was impossible to see what was making the noise. Suddenly, the source of the noise came into view, but it was too late. A huge viper sprang from the darkness and swallowed them whole.

Back on the right path, the frog and the remaining members of the group rested in the shade for quite some time and then pressed forward. As they moved on, the path once again became difficult to travel, because of the presence of thorns that were growing up in the midst of the path. The sharp piercing of the thorns were very painful and once again the members of the group began to murmur. Some of the frogs began to doubt if the path they were on was indeed the only path to the river. There had to be other paths, they speculated. Others in the group began to doubt if the frog had ever seen a river at all.

Up ahead, they could see yet another path that veered off from the path they were on. As they looked down that path, they could see that it went down a long, sloping hill. A couple of the frogs began to speculate that there had to be water at the bottom of the hill. There is always water at the bottom of a hill, they convinced each other.

The frog himself was very weary and for a moment, he found that he too wanted to believe that there was another way to the river, but he knew what he had seen from the top of the rock. There had been only one path which led there.

Before the frog could even try to dissuade the two, they were on their way down the other path, the path they were sure would bring them to water. This path went down a hill which from afar did not look that steep, but the further they descended along the path, the steeper it got. This steepness was so gradual that at first, they did not notice. However, soon it became so steep, that they lost their footing and fell headlong into a deep, dark abyss, never to be seen again.

Back at the main path the frog and his remaining traveling companions painstakingly made their way through the thorns and eventually the path was once again thorn-free. The frog felt that they must be very close to the river now. The smell of water was heavy in the air. Soon they could even hear the sound of the current.

As they broke through the forest, they came upon a broad, open place and right in front of them was the beautiful, sparkling river! They all began to hop up and down with joy and thanksgiving as they made their way to the edge of the river. However, when they reached the edge they were devastated to see that the river was bordered by an incredibly steep, rocky incline.

Some of the frogs began to weep uncontrollably, and began to blame the frog for bringing them all of this way, only to die right next to the water's edge. It would be impossible to climb up and over the rocks, especially on such a steep incline, the frogs moaned. They insisted that the boulders were giants and that they were mere grasshoppers in comparison. They were convinced that they would fall right through the cracks and crevices between the rocks and perish if they were to make such an attempt.

Suddenly, the piercing cry of the bird of prey could be heard nearby. The panic-stricken group became frozen with fear. The shrill cry of the bird came closer and closer until the bird's menacing shadow was right on top of them. The terrified group looked up forbodingly, expecting death to engulf them, but to their surprise and utter relief it was the shadow of the father and the son enveloping them.

The father spoke to his son and the son obediently reached down and lifted the frogs one by one into a bucket he was holding. Then he easily walked down the steep incline to a quiet part of the river and delivered the frog and his companions into the river. As the sun began to set, the father and the son walked back through their backyard and went inside their house and with delight watched the frogs from their window.

Oh, how the frog and his companions rejoiced and celebrated in their new home! The river was beyond anything they could have ever dreamed or imagined.

They shouted for joy and burst into jubilant singing. A new song, one they had never sang before, sprang from their mouths. They were all in agreement that the trials and tests they had undergone to reach the river were all worth every bit of the pain and suffering they had endured. There would be no more tears. No more mourning or crying or pain. No more hunger or thirst. They were home.

#### PSALM 40: 1-5

I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mid and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord. Blessed is the man who makes the Lord his trust, who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods. Many, O Lord my God, are the wonders you have done. The things you planned for us no one can recount to you; were I to speak and tell of them, they would be too many to declare.

MATTHEW 13:3-9

A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. He who has ears, let him hear.

My Jesus

If I could capture this time together, I would put it in a treasure chest, my Jesus.

That I would have it into eternity.

But how can you capture the son?

His rays of love you can not see with mere eyes.

But my heart knows you, my Jesus.

The eyes of my heart see you.

Oh, how my soul basks in your love.

My Jesus, carry me away as on the wings of a dove.

And on that day when we meet face to face;

On that day, we will embrace...my Jesus

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[Your email to Carol is welcomed](#)