

The Blessing Seed: A Creation Myth for the New Millennium

Alison Dexter Caitlin Matthews Illus.

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Here is the creation story told with a feel good, New Age sensibility. Hoping to understand their special gift, the Man and the Woman eat the fruit from the tree of life before it is ripe. Instead of expelling them from the garden, God is pleased with their eagerness to learn. He tells them of the four paths: the path of wonder, of emptiness, of making a home, and of coming home. These paths will give them insight into their gift to learn and to care. The gift will eventually ripen and become a blessing seed, allowing them to spread God's blessings throughout the Earth.

While the telling of this tale may be refreshing to an adult, a child may be hard-pressed to connect to a text with such high-minded intentions. Rather than allowing the Man and the Woman to actually experience the lessons of the different paths, they are simply told how things will be.

When you look after the Earth, when you defend the helpless, when you speak for those who have no voice, when you enjoy and respect my creation, then you will be most like me.

These are the words God spoke to the couple about the final path. Ecological, philosophical, metaphysical, enlightening, yes. However, a child may find it difficult to empathize with such preaching.

The book is illustrated with decorative, batik-like watercolors. They are bright, colorful and fanciful. The tree of life is orange with pink fruit. The man, who is black and naked, has goofy spiked hair. These lighthearted, childlike illustrations are eye-catching enough to help draw the wandering mind back to the page. This is a book that could be intriguing to youngsters, but would be more readily appreciated by mature readers.

MARTHA TOPOL (September / October 1998)

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