

SUSANNA

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1 There lived a man in Babylon, called Joacim: 2 And he took a wife, whose name was Susanna, the daughter of Chelcias, a very fair woman, and one that feared the Lord. 3 Her parents also were righteous, and taught their daughter according to the law of Moses. 4 Now Joacim was a great rich man, and had a fair garden joining to his house: and to him resorted the Jews; because he was more honourable than all others. 5 The same year were appointed two of the ancients of the people to be judges, such as the Lord spoke of, that wickedness came from Babylon from ancient judges, who seemed to govern the people. 6 These kept much at Joacim's house: and all that had any suits in law came to them. 7 Now when the people departed away at noon, Susanna went into her husband's garden to walk. 8 And the two elders saw her going in every day, and walking; so that their lust was inflamed towards her. 9 And they perverted their own mind, and turned away their eyes, that they might not look to heaven, nor remember just judgements. 10 And albeit they both were wounded with her love, yet dared not one show another his grief. 11 For they were ashamed to declare their lust, that they desired to have to do with her. 12 Yet they watched diligently from day to day to see her. 13 And the one said to the other, Let us now go home: for it is dinner time. 14 So when they were gone out, they parted the one from the other, and turning back again they came to the same place; and after that they had asked one another the cause, they acknowledged their lust: then appointed they a time both together, when they might find her alone. 15 And it fell out, as they watched a fit time, she went in as before with two maids only, and she was desirous to wash herself in the garden: for it was hot. 16 And there was no body there save the two elders, that had hid themselves, and watched her. 17 Then she said to her maids, Bring me oil and washing balls, and shut the garden doors, that I may wash me. 18 And they did as she bade them, and shut the garden doors, and went out themselves at privy doors to fetch the things that she had commanded them: but they saw not the elders, because they were hid. 19 Now when the maids were gone forth, the two elders rose up, and ran to her, saying, 20 Behold, the garden doors are shut, that no man can see us, and we are in love with you; therefore consent to us, and lie with us. 21 If you will not, we will bear witness against you, that a young man was with you: and therefore you did send away your maids from you. 22 Then Susanna sighed, and said, I am straitened on every side: for if I do this thing, it is death to me: and if I do it not I can't escape your hands. 23 It is better for me to fall into your hands, and not do it, than to sin in the sight of the Lord. 24 With that Susanna cried with a loud voice: and the two elders cried out against her. 25 Then ran the one, and opened the garden door. 26 So when the servants of the house heard the cry in the garden, they rushed in at the privy door, to see what was done to her. 27 But when the elders had declared their matter, the servants were greatly ashamed: for there was never such a report made of Susanna.

²⁸ And it came to pass the next day, when the people were assembled to her husband Joacim, the two elders came also full of mischievous imagination against Susanna to put her to death; ²⁹ And said before the people, Send for Susanna, the daughter of Chelcias, Joacim's wife. And so they sent. ³⁰ So she came with her father and mother, her children, and all her kindred. ³¹ Now Susanna was a very delicate woman, and beauteous to behold. ³² And these wicked men commanded to uncover her face, (for she was covered) that they might be filled with her beauty. ³³ Therefore her friends and all that saw her wept. ³⁴ Then the two elders stood up in the midst of the people, and laid their hands upon her head. ³⁵ And she weeping looked up towards heaven: for her heart trusted in the Lord. ³⁶ And the elders said, As we walked in the garden alone, this woman came in with two maids, and shut the garden doors, and sent the maids away. ³⁷ Then a young man, who there was hid, came to her, and lay with her. ³⁸ Then we that stood in a corner of the garden, seeing this wickedness, ran to them. ³⁹ And when we saw them together, the man we could not hold: for he was stronger than we, and opened the door, and leapt out. ⁴⁰ But having taken this woman, we asked who the young man was, but she would not tell us: these things do we testify. ⁴¹ Then the assembly believed them as those that were the elders and judges of the people: so they condemned her to death. ⁴² Then Susanna cried out with a loud voice, and said, O everlasting God, that know the secrets, and know all things before they be: ⁴³ You know that they have borne false witness against me, and, behold, I must die; whereas I never did such things as these men have maliciously invented against me. ⁴⁴ And the Lord heard her voice. ⁴⁵ Therefore when she was led to be put to death, the Lord raised up the holy spirit of a young youth whose name was Daniel: ⁴⁶ Who cried with a loud voice, I am clear from the blood of this woman. ⁴⁷ Then all the people turned them towards him, and said, What mean these words that you have spoken? ⁴⁸ So he standing in the midst of them said, Are you° such fools, you° sons of Israel, that without examination or knowledge of the truth you° have condemned a daughter of Israel? ⁴⁹ Return again to the place of judgement: for they have borne false witness against her. ⁵⁰ Therefore all the people turned again in haste, and the elders said to him, Come, sit down amongst us, and show it us, seeing God has given you the honour of an elder. ⁵¹ Then said Daniel to them, Put these two aside one far from another, and I will examine them. ⁵² So when they were put asunder one from another, he called one of them, and said to him, O you that have become old in wickedness, now your sins which you have committed aforetime are come to light. ⁵³ For you have pronounced false judgement and have condemned the innocent and have let the guilty go free; albeit the Lord says, The innocent and righteous shall you not kill. ⁵⁴ Now then, if you have seen her, tell me, Under what tree saw you them companying together? Who answered, Under a mastick tree. ⁵⁵ And Daniel said, Very well; you have lied against your own head; for even now the angel of God has received the sentence of God to cut you in two. ⁵⁶ So he put him aside, and commanded to bring the other, and said to him, O you seed of Chanaan, and