

The Story of Susanna (possibly at the beginning of the what have as the Masoretic version)

1-5 There dwelt a man in Babylon, called Joakim: And he took a wife, whose name was Susanna, the daughter of Hilkiyah, a very fair woman, and one that feared the Lord. Her parents also were righteous and taught their daughter according to the law of Moses. Now Joakim was very wealthy, and had a fair garden joining unto his house: and the Jews used to come to him since he was the most eminent of them all.

5-6 The same year were appointed two of the elders of the people to be judges, it was such as the Lord spoke of, 'Wickedness came forth from Babylon as elders judges, who only seemed to govern the people.' These kept much at Joakim's house: and all that had any suits in law came unto them.

7-9 It happened when the people departed away at noon, Susanna went into her husband's garden to walk. And the two elders saw her going in every day, and walking; so that their lust was inflamed toward her. And they perverted their own mind, and turned away their eyes, that they might not look unto heaven, nor remember just judgments.

10-12 Both were 'love-sick' for her love, but they dared not tell one another of their frustration. For they were ashamed to admit their passion, that they wished to lie with her. So they watched diligently from day to day to get a glimpse of her.

13-14 One day they said one to another, 'Let us now go home it's time for lunch.' And leaving, they parted company from one another. But doubling back again, they came to the same place; and after quizzing one another on the reason, they admitted their passion. So they agreed with one another on a time they might find her alone.

15-18 So it was while they waited and watched for just the right time, she came in as usual with only two maids only. And she wanted to bathe as it was hot. And since there was no one else – save the two elders who were hiding and watching, she said to her maids, 'Bring me oil and cosmetics, and shut the garden doors, so that I may bathe.' The did as she asked, shut the garden gates, and went out by the side doors to fetch the things that she had asked for. But they didn't see the elders since they were hiding.

19-21 As soon as the maids had left, the two elders got up, and accosted her, saying, 'Look, the garden gates are shut, so no one can see us and we desire you. If not, we will testify against you and say that a young man was with you and that is why you sent the maids away.'

22-23 Susanna groaned, and said, 'I'm in a bind! For if I do this thing, it'll be my death; and if I don't do it, I'll not escape your hands. But I would rather not do it and so fall into your hands than sin in the eyes of the Lord.'

24-27 So Susanna screamed, and the two elders shouted against her. And one of them ran to open the garden gates. When the household heard the commotion in the garden, they dashed in through at side door to see what had happened to her. When the elders had given their version, the servants were shocked; for this sort of thing had ever before been said about Susanna.

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28-29 The next day, when the people had gathered at her husband Joakim's house, the two elders came viscusously determined to have her put to death. So in the presence of the people they said, 'Summon Susanna, daughter of Hilkiah, Joakim's wife'. So they summoned her.

30-33 So she came with her father and mother, her children, and all her relatives. Now Susanna was very refined and shapely and the scoundrels ordered that she be uncovered so that they may feast upon her beauty. But her friends and all who saw her were in tears.

34-35 Then the two elders stood up in the midst of the people, and laid their hands upon her head. And she weeping, looked up toward heaven: for her heart trusted in the Lord.

36-40 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. Then a young man, who had been hiding, went over and lay with her.

But being in a corner of the garden, we saw this wicked thing and ran toward them. And though we saw them being intimate, we were unable to hold the man because he was too strong for us; and he opened the gates and took off. But we grabbed this one here and asked who the young man was, but she would not tell us. These things do we testify. Inasmuch as they were elders of the people and judges, the entire congregation believed them and condemned Susanna to death.

42-43 Then Susanna cried out with a loud voice, and said, 'Eternal God, you know all the secrets and and know everything before it happens, you know that they have framed me. Must I now die, being innocent of what they have so maliciously charged against me?'

44-46 And the Lord heard her voice. And just as she was led to be put to death, God raised up the spirit of a young youth whose name was Daniel. And he shouted out, 'I am innocent of this woman's blood!'

47-49 Then all the people turned to him and asked, 'What do you mean by that?'. Having taken his stand in their midst, he replied, 'Are you such fools, sons of Israel? Would you condemn a daughter of Israel without first cross-examining and discovering its accuracy? Go back to the place of trial; these men have framed her.'

50-51 So all the people hurried back and then the presiding elders said to him, 'Come sit with us and inform us, since God has granted the authority to you'.

Then Daniel said to them, 'Separate them some distance from one another, and I will interrogate them.'

52-54 When they had been separated from one another, he summoned one of them and said to him, 'You who have grown old in wickedness, the sins which you committed in the past have now caught up with you: making unjust decisions, condemning the innocent and acquitting the guilty, though the Lord has said, "You shall not put to death the innocent and righteous person.' Now then, if you really did see this woman, tell us: Under what tree did you see them making love?'

He answered, 'Under a clove/*schinon* tree.'

55-58 'Very good!' retorted Daniel, 'you've perjured yourself!' Already and angel of God has received the sentence from God and will cleave/*schisei* you in half!'

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Then he set him aside and ordered them to bring in the other one. You descendant of Canaan, not Judah,' said Daniel to him, 'beauty has seduced you and lust has corrupted your heart! Now then tell me, under which tree did you catch them making love?'

'Under a yew/*prinos*', he answered.

59 'Very good!' retorted Daniel to him, 'you, too, have perjured yourself! The angel of God is waiting with drawn sword to hew/*prisai* you in half and destroy 'the pair of you'!

60-62 Then all the congregation cheered, and they blessed God who saves those who trust in Him. Then they turned on the two elders, for Daniel had convicted them of perjury through their own testimony. So they punished 'the elders' the way 'the elders' had intended to afflict their neighbor. Acting in the accordance with the law of Moses, they put them to death. So an innocent life was saved that day.

63-64 Hilkiyah and his wife praised God for their daughter Susanna, as did her husband Joakim and all the relatives because she was found innocent of any impropriety.

From that day forward Daniel had a great reputation in the eyes of the people.

Prayer of Azariah (inserted between 3.23 and 3.24 of the Masoretic version)

1 They walked around in the midst of the flames, singing hymns to God and blessing the Lord. 2 Then Azariah stood still in the fire and prayed aloud:

3 'Blessed are you, O Lord, God of our ancestors, and worthy of praise; and glorious is your name for ever!

4 For you are just in all you have done;
all your works are true and your ways right,
and all your judgements are true.

5 You have executed true judgements in all you have brought upon us and upon Jerusalem, the holy city of our ancestors; by a true judgement you have brought all this upon us because of our sins.

6 For we have sinned and broken your law in turning away from you; in all matters we have sinned grievously.

7 We have not obeyed your commandments,
we have not kept them or done what you have commanded us for our own good.

8 So all that you have brought upon us,
and all that you have done to us,
you have done by a true judgement.

9 You have handed us over to our enemies, lawless and hateful rebels, and to an unjust king, the most wicked in all the world.

10 And now we cannot open our mouths; we, your servants who worship you, have become a shame and a reproach.

11 For your name's sake do not give us up for ever,
and do not annul your covenant.

12 Do not withdraw your mercy from us,
for the sake of Abraham your beloved and for the sake of your servant Isaac and Israel your holy one,
13 to whom you promised to multiply their descendants like the stars of heaven and like the sand on the shore of the sea.

14 For we, O Lord, have become fewer than any other nation, and are brought low this day in all the world because of our sins.

15 In our day we have no ruler, or prophet, or leader, no burnt-offering, or sacrifice, or oblation, or incense, no place to make an offering before you and to find mercy.

16 Yet with a contrite heart and a humble spirit may we be accepted,

17 as though it were with burnt-offerings of rams and bulls, or with tens of thousands of fat lambs; such may our sacrifice be in your sight today, and

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may we unreservedly follow you, for no shame will come to those who trust in you.

18 And now with all our heart we follow you; we fear you and seek your presence.

19 Do not put us to shame, but deal with us in your patience and in your abundant mercy. be broken.

22 Let them know that you alone are the Lord God, glorious over the whole world...'

20 Deliver us in accordance with your marvelous works, and bring glory to your name, O Lord.

21 Let all who do harm to your servants be put to shame; let them be disgraced and deprived of all power, and let their strength

Bel and the Dragon (at the end of the Masoretic version)

1 When King Astyages was laid to rest with his ancestors, Cyrus the Persian succeeded to his kingdom. 2 Daniel was a companion of the king, and was the most honored of all his friends.

3 Now the Babylonians had an idol called Bel, and every day they provided for it twelve bushels of choice flour and forty sheep and six measures of wine. 4 The king revered it and went every day to worship it. But Daniel worshipped his own God.

So the king said to him, 'Why do you not worship Bel?' 5 He answered, 'Because I do not revere idols made with hands, but the living God, who created heaven and earth and has dominion over all living creatures.'

6 The king said to him, 'Do you not think that Bel is a living god? Do you not see how much he eats and drinks every day?' 7 And Daniel laughed, and said, 'Do not be deceived, O king, for this thing is only clay inside and bronze outside, and it never ate or drank anything.'

8 Then the king was angry and called the priests of Bel and said to them, 'If you do not tell me who is eating these provisions, you shall die. 9 But if you prove that Bel is eating them, Daniel shall die, because he has spoken blasphemy against Bel.' Daniel said to the king, 'Let it be done as you have said.'

10 Now there were seventy priests of Bel, besides their wives and children. So the king went with Daniel into the temple of Bel. 11 The priests of Bel said, 'See, we are now going outside; you yourself, O king, set out the food and prepare the wine, and shut the door and seal it with your signet. 12 When you return in the morning, if you do not find that Bel has eaten it all, we will die; otherwise Daniel will, who is telling lies about us.'

13 They were unconcerned, for beneath the table they had made a hidden entrance, through which they used to go in regularly and consume the provisions. 14 After they had gone out, the king set out the food for Bel. Then Daniel ordered his servants to bring ashes, and they scattered them throughout the whole temple in the presence of the king alone. Then they went out, shut the door and sealed it with the king's signet, and departed. 15 During the night the priests came as usual, with their wives and children, and they ate and drank everything.

16 Early in the morning the king rose and came, and Daniel with him. 17 The king said, 'Are the seals unbroken, Daniel?' He answered, 'They are unbroken, O king.' 18 As soon as the doors were opened, the king looked at the table, and shouted in a loud voice, 'You are great, O Bel, and in you there is no deceit at all!'

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19 But Daniel laughed and restrained the king from going in. 'Look at the floor', he said, 'and notice whose footprints these are.' 20The king said, 'I see the footprints of men and women and children.'

21 Then the king was enraged, and he arrested the priests and their wives and children. They showed him the secret doors through which they used to enter to consume what was on the table. 22Therefore the king put them to death, and gave Bel over to Daniel, who destroyed it and its temple.

23 Now in that place there was a great dragon, which the Babylonians revered. 24The king said to Daniel, 'You cannot deny that this is a living god; so worship him.' 25Daniel said, 'I worship the Lord my God, for he is the living God. 26But give me permission, O king, and I will kill the dragon without sword or club.' The king said, 'I give you permission.'

27 Then Daniel took pitch, fat, and hair, and boiled them together and made cakes, which he fed to the dragon. The dragon ate them, and burst open. Then Daniel said, 'See what you have been worshipping!'

28 When the Babylonians heard about it, they were very indignant and conspired against the king, saying, 'The king has become a Jew; he has destroyed Bel, and killed the dragon, and slaughtered the priests.' 29Going to the king, they said, 'Hand Daniel over to us, or else we will kill you and your household.' 30The king saw that they were pressing him hard, and under compulsion he handed Daniel over to them.

31 They threw Daniel into the lions' den, and he was there for six days. 32There were seven lions in the den, and every day they had been given two human bodies and two sheep; but now they were given nothing, so that they would devour Daniel.

33 Now the prophet Habakkuk was in Judea; he had made a stew and had broken bread into a bowl, and was going into the field to take it to the reapers. 34But the angel of the Lord said to Habakkuk, 'Take the food that you have to Babylon, to Daniel, in the lions' den.' 35Habakkuk said, 'Sir, I have never seen Babylon, and I know nothing about the den.' 36Then the angel of the Lord took him by the crown of his head and carried him by his hair; with the speed of the wind he set him down in Babylon, right over the den.

37 Then Habakkuk shouted, 'Daniel, Daniel! Take the food that God has sent you.' 38Daniel said, 'You have remembered me, O God, and have not forsaken those who love you.' 39So Daniel got up and ate. And the angel of God immediately returned Habakkuk to his own place.

40 On the seventh day the king came to mourn for Daniel. When he came to the den he looked in, and there sat Daniel! 41The king shouted with a loud voice, 'You are great, O Lord, the God of Daniel, and there is no other besides you!' 42Then he pulled Daniel out, and threw into the den those who had attempted his destruction, and they were instantly eaten before his eyes.