

DANIEL AND SUSANNA

¹ *Here beginneth an epistle of holy Susanna.*
In those days a man was in Babylon, and his name was Joakim./A man was in Babylon, and his name was Joakim.

² And he took a wife, Susanna by name, the daughter of Hilkiah, a *woman* full fair, and dreading the Lord.

³ Forsooth her father and mother, when they were rightful [*or just*], taught their daughter* by [*or after*] the law of Moses.

⁴ Soothly Joakim was full rich, and had a garden nigh his house; and the Jews came to him, for he was the most worshipful [*or more honourable*] of all.

⁵ And twain eld [*or two old*] men *or priests* were ordained to be judges in that year, of which the Lord spake, that wickedness went out of Babylon, of the elder judges, that seemed to govern [*or were seen to rule*] the people.

⁶ These *judges* used often [*or haunted*] the house of Joakim; and all men that had dooms came to them.

⁷ Forsooth when the people had turned again after midday, Susanna entered, and walked in the garden of her husband.

* **CHAPTER 1:3** *Here fathers and mothers be admonished to teach by the law of God, not only their sons, but also their daughters.*

⁸ And the elder men saw her entering each day, and walking; and they burnt out into [*or in*] the covet-ousness or concupiscence of her.

⁹ And they turned away their wit, and bowed down [*or bowed away*] their eyes, that they saw not heaven, neither bethought on just dooms.

¹⁰ Soothly both were wounded by the love of her, and they showed not their sorrow to themselves together;

¹¹ for they were ashamed to show to themselves their covetousness or concupiscence, willing to lie fleshly by [*or with*] her.

¹² And they espied each day more busily to see her.

¹³ And the one said to the tother, Go we home, for the hour of meat is.

¹⁴ And they went out, and parted from themselves. And when they had turned again, they came into one place; and they asked each of other the cause, and they acknowledged their covetousness. And then in common they ordained a time, when they might find her alone.

¹⁵ Forsooth it was done, when they espied a covenable day, she entered sometime, as yesterday and the third day ago, with two damsels alone, and would be washed in the garden; for why heat was.

¹⁶ And there was not any man or no man was there, except the two eld [*or old*] men hid, beholding her.

¹⁷ Therefore she said to the damsels, Bring ye to me oil, and ointments; and close the doors of the garden, that I be washed. [*And she said*

to the maidens, Bring ye to me oil, and soap, or ointment; and shut ye the doors of the garden, that I be washed.]

¹⁸ And they did as she commanded; and they closed the doors of the garden, and went out by a postern, to bring those things that she had commanded. And they knew not, that the eld [*or old*] men were hid within.

¹⁹ Soothly when the damsels were gone out, *the twain eld men rised [or the two old men rose]*, and ran to her, and said,

²⁰ Lo! the doors of the garden be closed, and no man seeth us, and we be in the covetousness or concupis-cence of thee. Wherefore assent thou to us, and be thou meddled [*or joined*] with us.

²¹ And if thou wilt not, we shall say witnessing against thee, that a young man was with thee, and for this cause thou sentest out the damsels from thee.

²² And Susanna inwardly sorrowed, and said, Anguishes be to me on each side; for if I do this [*thing*], death is to me; forsooth if I do not, I shall not escape your hands.

²³ But it is better for me to fall into your hands, without work, than to do sin [*or to sin*] in the sight of the Lord.

²⁴ And Susanna cried with great voice, but also the eld [*or old*] men cried against her.

²⁵ Forsooth one ran, and opened the door of the garden.

²⁶ Soothly when the servants of the house had heard the cry in the garden, they fell in by the postern, to see what it was.

27 But after that the eld [*or old*] men spake, the servants were ashamed greatly, for never was such a word said of Susanna.

28 And the morrow day was made. And when the people was come [*or came*] to Joakim, her husband, also the two priests *or the two old men* full of wicked [*or evil*] thoughts came against Susanna, for to slay her.

29 And they said before all the people, Send ye to Susanna, the daughter of Hilkiah, the wife of Joakim. And anon they sent.

30 And she came with her father, and mother, and children, and all [*her*] kinsmen.

31 And certainly Susanna was full delicate, *either tender*, and fair of shape [*or form*].

32 And those wicked men command-ed, that she should be uncovered, for she was covered; that namely so they should be filled of [*or with*] her fairness.

33 Therefore her *kinsmen*[*or her nigh friends*] wept, and all that knew her.

34 Forsooth the two priests rised together in the midst of the people, and set [*or putted*] their hands on the head of her.

35 And she wept, and beheld to heaven, for her heart had trust in the Lord.

36 And the priests said, When we walked alone in the garden, this *Susanna* entered with two damsels [*or two maidens*]; and she closed the door of the garden, and let go the damsels.

37 And a young man, that was hid, came to her, and lay by her [*or did lechery with her*].

38 Certainly when we were in a corner of the garden, we saw the wickedness, and ran to them,

39 and we saw them meddled together. And soothly we might not take [*or catch*] him, for he was stronger than we; and when he had opened the doors, he skipped [*or he leapt*] out.

40 But when we had taken this *woman*, we asked, who was the young man; and she would not show to us. Of this thing we be witnesses.

41 The multitude believed to them, as to the elder men and judges of the people, and condemned her to death.

42 Forsooth Susanna cried loud with great voice, and said, Lord God, without beginning and end [*or Lord God everlasting*], thou art or that art knower of hid things, that knowest all things before that they be done [*or be made*];

43 thou knowest, that they have borne false witnessing against me. And lo! I die, when I have not done any of these things, which these men have made maliciously against me.

44 Forsooth the Lord heard the voice of her.

45 And when she was led to the death, the Lord raised the holy spirit of a young child, whose name *was* Daniel.

46 And he cried loud with a great voice, I am clean of the blood of this *woman*.

47 And all the people turned again to him [*or together turned to him*], and said, What is this word, which thou hast spoken?

48 And when he stood in the midst of them, he said, So ye, fond children of Israel [*or fools, sons*

of Israel], not deeming neither knowing that that is true, condemned the daughter of Israel.

49 Turn ye again to the doom, for they spake false witnessing against her.

50 Therefore the people turned again with haste. And the eld [*or old*] men *or elders of the people, not those two priests*, said to him, Come thou, and sit in the midst of us, and show to us; for God hath given to thee the honour of elder.

51 And Daniel said to them, Part ye them atwain afar, [*or each from other*], and I shall deem them.

52 Therefore, when they were parted one from the other, he called one of them, and said to him, Thou eld [*or old*] man of evil days, now thy sins be come [*on thee*], which thou wroughtest before,

53 deeming unjust dooms, oppressing innocents, and delivering guilty men, when the Lord saith, Thou shalt not slay an innocent and just man.

54 But now, if thou sawest her, say thou, under what tree thou sawest them speaking together to themselves? Which said, Under an hawthorn tree [*or a sloe tree*].

55 Forsooth Daniel said, Rightly thou liest in thine head; for lo! the angel of the Lord, by a sentence taken of him, shall cut thee by the middle.

56 And when he was moved away, he commanded the tother to come, and said to him, Thou seed of Canaan, and not of Judah, fairness hath deceived thee, and covetousness hath mis-turned thine heart [*or turned thine heart upside-down*];

57 thus ye did to the daughters of Israel, and they dreaded, and spake to *[or with]* you, but the daughter of Judah suffered not your wickedness.

58 Now therefore say to me, under what tree thou sawest them speaking together to themselves? Which said, Under a blackthorn *[or a plum tree]*.

59 Forsooth Daniel said to him, Rightly also thou liest in thine head; for the angel of the Lord dwelleth, and hath a sword, that he cut thee by the middle, and slay you.

60 Therefore all the people cried loud with great voice, and blessed God *[or the Lord]*, that saveth them that hope in him.

61 And they rised together against the two priests; for Daniel had convicted them by their mouth, that they had borne *[or for to have said]* false witnessing;

62 and they did to them, as they had done evil against the neighbouress, that they should do by *[or after]* the law of Moses, and they killed them. And guiltless blood was saved in that day.

63 Forsooth Hilkiah and his wife praised the Lord *[or God]* in that day for Susanna, their daughter, with Joakim, her husband, and with all her kinsmen, for a foul thing was not found in her.

64 Forsooth Daniel was made great in the sight of the people, from that day and afterward.

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