

## THE FALL OF MAN

(a) God permitted Adam and Eve, his wife, to eat fruit from every tree in Eden except the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, which it would be death to taste or even touch. The Serpent who was there subtly asked Eve: 'Has God not forbidden you to eat any fruit whatsoever?' She answered: 'No, but he warned us on pain of death to abstain from a certain tree in the middle of this garden.' The Serpent cried: 'Then God has deceived you! Its fruit does not cause death, but only confers wisdom: He is keeping you in ignorance.' Thus Eve was persuaded to taste the fruit, and made Adam do likewise.<sup>1</sup>

(b) When they had eaten, Adam and Eve looked at each other and, suddenly understanding that they were naked, plucked fig-leaves and sewed them into aprons. They heard God walking through the garden at dusk, and hid among the trees. God called: 'Adam!', and again: 'Adam, where are you?' Adam looked out from his hiding-place and said: 'I heard Your approach, Lord, and hid my nakedness for shame.' God asked: 'Who told you of nakedness? Have you then eaten fruit of the forbidden tree?' Adam answered: 'Eve gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate it.' God turned to Eve: 'Alas, woman, what have you done?' She sighed, saying: 'The Serpent tricked me.' God cursed the Serpent: 'You shall lose your legs, and writhe upon your belly for ever, eating dust! I set a lasting enmity between you and woman. Her children will stamp on your children's heads until their heels are bruised.'<sup>2</sup>

Then He cursed Eve: 'I will multiply your labour and sorrow; you shall bear children in pain; you shall yearn for your husband, and be ruled by him!'

(c) His next curse fell upon Adam: 'Because you have listened to Eve rather than to Me, I curse the soil that you must now till all the days of your life, eating bread in the sweat of your brow, struggling to uproot thorns and thistles. And at length death shall return your body to the dust from which I formed it!'<sup>3</sup>

(d) Since aprons of fig-leaves were too fragile for such hard la-

bour, God mercifully made Adam and Eve garments of skin. But He said to Himself: 'This man has become like a god in his knowledge of good and evil! What if he were to pluck the fruit hanging on the Tree of Life, and live eternally?' With that, He drove Adam out of Eden, posting at its East Gate certain cherubim called 'the Flame of Whirling Swords', to bar his way.<sup>4</sup>

(e) The Serpent had rudely thrust Eve against the Tree of Knowledge, saying: 'You have not died after touching this tree; neither will you die after eating its fruit!' He also said: 'All former beings are ruled by the latest beings. You and Adam, created last of all, rule the world; eat therefore and be wise, lest God send new beings to usurp your rule!' As Eve's shoulders touched the tree, she saw Death approaching. 'Now I must die,' she groaned, 'and God will give Adam a new wife! Let me persuade him to eat as I do, so that if we must both die, we shall die together; but if not, we shall live together.' She plucked a fruit and ate, then tearfully pleaded with Adam until he agreed to share it.<sup>5</sup>

(f) Eve later persuaded all beasts and birds to taste the fruit—or all except the prudent phoenix, which has remained immortal ever since.<sup>6</sup>

(g) Adam wondered at Eve's nakedness: because her glorious outer skin, a sheet of light smooth as a finger-nail, had fallen away.<sup>7</sup> Yet though the beauty of her inner body, shining like a white pearl, entranced him, he fought for three hours against the temptation to eat and become as she was; holding the fruit in his hand meanwhile. At last he said: 'Eve, I would rather die than outlive you. If Death were to claim your spirit, God could never console me with another woman equalling your loveliness!' So saying, he tasted the fruit, and the outer skin of light fell away from him also.<sup>8</sup>

(h) Some hold that Adam, by eating the fruit, won the gift of prophecy;<sup>9</sup> but that, when he tried to pluck leaves for an apron, the trees drove him off, crying: 'Begone, thief, who disobeyed your Creator! You shall have nothing from us!' Nevertheless, the Tree of Knowledge let him take what he wished—they were fig-leaves—approving his preference of wisdom to immortality.<sup>10</sup>

(i) Others make the Tree of Knowledge an immense wheat stalk, taller than a cedar; or a vinestock; or a citron-tree, whose fruit is used in celebration of Tabernacles. But Enoch reports that it was a date-palm.<sup>11</sup>

(j) According to some, the garments God gave Adam and Eve resembled fine Egyptian linens from Beth Shean, that mould them-

in their clutches, she became a tree, ' and left before them her shadowy reflection resembling herself; ' and they defiled [it] ' foully.—And they defiled the form that she had stamped in ' her likeness, so that <sup>30</sup> by the form they had modelled, together with [their] (own) image, they made themselves liable to condemnation. '

Then the Female Spiritual Principle came [in] ' the Snake, the Instructor; and it taught [them], ' saying, "What did he [say to] ' you (pl.)? Was it, 'From every tree in the Garden <sup>35</sup> shall you (sing.) eat; yet—from [the tree] <sup>90</sup> of recognizing evil and good ' do not eat?"

The carnal Woman said, ' "Not only did he say 'Do not eat,' but even 'Do not touch it; for the day you (pl.) eat <sup>5</sup> from it, with death you (pl.) are going to die.' "

And the Snake, the Instructor, said, "With death ' you (pl.) shall not die; for it was out of jealousy ' that he said this to you (pl.). Rather your (pl.) eyes ' shall open and you (pl.) shall come to be like gods, recognizing <sup>10</sup> evil and good." ' And the Female Instructing Principle was taken away from the Snake, ' and she left it behind merely a thing of the earth. '

And the carnal Woman took from the tree ' and ate; and she gave to her husband as well as herself; and <sup>15</sup> these beings that possessed only a soul, ate. And their imperfection ' became apparent in their lack of Acquaintance; and ' they\* recognized that they were naked of the Spiritual Element, ' and took fig leaves and bound them ' upon their loins.

Then the chief Ruler came; <sup>20</sup> and he said, "Adam! Where are you?"—for he did not ' understand what had happened.

And Adam ' said, "I heard your voice and was ' afraid because I was naked; and I hid." '

The Ruler said, "Why did you (sing.) hide, unless it is <sup>25</sup> because you (sing.) have eaten from the tree ' from which alone I commanded you (sing.) not to eat? ' And you (sing.) have eaten!" '

Adam said, "The Woman that you gave me, ' [she gave] to me and I ate." And the arrogant <sup>30</sup> Ruler cursed the Woman.

The Woman ' said, "It was the Snake that led me astray and I ate." ' [They turned] to the Snake and cursed its shadowy reflection, ' [...] powerless, not comprehending ' [that] it was a form they themselves had modelled. From that day, <sup>91</sup> the Snake came to be under the curse of the Authorities; ' until the All-powerful Man was to come, ' that curse fell upon the Snake.

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It is assuredly given to thee  
neither to hunger therein, nor  
to go naked,  
neither to thirst therein, nor to  
suffer the sun.'

Then Satan whispered to him  
saying, 'Adam, shall I point thee to  
the Tree of Eternity, and a Kingdom  
that decays not?'

So the two of them ate of it, and  
their shameful parts revealed to them,  
and they took to stitching upon  
themselves leaves of the Garden. And  
Adam disobeyed his Lord, and  
so he erred.

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Thereafter his Lord chose him,  
and turned again unto him, and He  
guided him.

Said He, 'Get you down, both of you  
together, out of it, each of you an enemy  
to each; but if there comes to you from  
Me guidance,

then whosoever follows My guidance  
shall not go astray, neither shall he be  
unprosperous;

but whosoever turns away from My  
remembrance, his shall be a life  
of narrowness,

and on the Resurrection Day We shall  
raise him blind.'

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He shall say, 'O my Lord, why hast  
thou raised me blind, and I was  
wont to see?'

God shall say, 'Even so it is.  
Our signs came unto thee, and thou  
didst forget them; and so today  
thou art forgotten.'

So We recompense him who is prodigal

the Garden, and eat of where you will,  
but come not nigh this tree, lest you be  
of the evildoers.'

Then Satan whispered to them, to reveal  
to them that which was hidden from them  
of their shameful parts. He said, 'Your Lord  
has only prohibited you from this tree  
lest you become angels, or lest you  
become immortals.'

And he swore to them, 'Truly, I am for you  
a sincere adviser.'

So he led them on by delusion; and when  
they tasted the tree, their shameful parts  
revealed to them, so they took to stitching

THE BATTLEMENTS

upon themselves leaves of the Garden.  
And their Lord called to them, 'Did not I  
prohibit you from this tree, and say  
to you, "Verily Satan is for you  
a manifest foe"?'

They said, 'Lord, we have wronged ourselves,  
and if Thou dost not forgive us, and  
have mercy upon us, we shall surely be  
among the lost.'

Said He, 'Get you down, each of you  
an enemy to each. In the earth a sojourn  
shall be yours, and enjoyment  
for a time.'

Said He, 'Therein you shall live, and  
therein you shall die, and from there you  
shall be brought forth.'

Children of Adam! We have sent down on you  
a garment to cover your shameful parts,  
and feathers; and the garment of godfearing—  
that is better; that is one of God's signs;  
happily they will remember.

Children of Adam! Let not Satan tempt you  
as he brought your parents out of the Garden,  
stripping them of their garments to show them  
their shameful parts. Surely he sees you,  
he and his tribe, from where you see them not.

We have made the Satans the friends of those  
who do not believe.

And whenever they commit an indecency  
they say, 'We found our fathers practising it,  
and God has commanded us to do it.'

Say: 'God does not command indecency;  
what, do you say concerning God such things  
as you know not?'

Say: 'My Lord has commanded justice.  
Set your faces in every place of worship  
and call on Him, making your religion  
sincerely His. As He originated you

so you will return; a part He guided,  
and a part justly disposed to error—they  
have taken Satans for friends instead of G  
and think them guided.'

Children of Adam! Take your adornme.  
at every place of worship; and eat  
and drink, but be you not prodigal; He  
loves not the prodigal.

30 Say: 'Who has forbidden the ornament of God  
which He brought forth for His servants, and  
the good things of His providing?' Say:  
'These, on the Day of Resurrection, shall be  
exclusively for those who believed in this  
present life. So We distinguish the signs for  
a people who know.'

Say: 'My Lord has only forbidden indecencies,  
the inward and the outward, and sin,  
and unjust insolence, and that you associate  
with God that for which He sent down never  
authority, and that you say concerning God  
such as you know not.'

To every nation a term; when their term comes  
they shall not put it back by a single hour  
nor put it forward.

Children of Adam! If there should come to you  
Messengers from among you, relating to you  
My signs, then whosoever is godfearing  
and makes amends—

no fear shall be on them, neither shall they sorrow.  
And those that cry lies to Our signs, and  
wax proud against them—  
those shall be the inhabitants of the Fire,  
therein dwelling forever.

35 And who does greater evil than he who forges  
against God a lie, or cries lies to His  
signs? Those—their portion of the Book  
shall reach them; till, when Our messengers  
come to them, to take them away, they say,  
'Where is that you were calling on, beside God?'