

Selection from *The Garden of Purity*

Of old were the prophets, and a long long line
Of God-intoxicated souls frequented the soils of Araby,
Scions of Abraham, sired by Jacob and Ishmael and their king,
Filled with the light of God, stirred by the Word of God,
Whose lips would shout aloud or cry in pain,
Exhorting, beseeching, inveighing, warning,
Seeking to turn the hearts of men to the true Redeemer,
Striving to preserve that Law upon which the world was founded.
Once they came in marked procession, following each other,
Failed or succeeded before the public view,
But leaving a trail of holiness behind them;
So their very words and memories were affirmed,
And through the ages their influence has spread,
Even to the uttermost ends of the visible world.

The Great Synagogue was gone, the Oracle was hushed,
And the word of them Lord went out no longer from Jerusalem—
The Hebrew and the Nazarene lapsed into endless arguments,
Substituting vain theologies for Eternal Truths,
Damning each other instead of praising God,
Seeking external heresies rather than inner sanctity,
And losing in the twilight the brilliance of ancient ages.
But in the silences of the desert watched and waited
Those who knew the God of Silence and of Truth,
Who taught the mysteries to their few disciples,
Carrying the burden of holiness from age to age—
The line of prophets was gone, the spirit of prophecy dim,
And one alone was left to carry the torch—and that a woman!
But what a woman! Khadija, daughter of Khoilad,
Who carried the Light, the Secret and the Truth,
Seeking-for one whom God would bless with holiness.
Seeking, seeking, seeking, north and south, and east and west,
Veiling her mission in costly caravans,
Carrying pearls and frankincense and myrrh
And wheat and corn and barley and other merchandise,
Finding material recompense beyond her needs,
But always hoping to find in the road or market-place
The man whom God had sent, whom she must find.
She had passed the gates of maidenhood and marriage,
But the adornment of comeliness remain,
More like a houri than a woman, she did not age,
She could not age who lived in God for God.

When in middle life she paused in Mecca,
There where she sought the least she saw the signs:
The veil of light upon his noble shoulders,

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The shadow of light across his simple heart,
The marks of light in the aura around his body,
Shrouding his earthly being, yet pointing toward Perfection.
As yet he knew it not, being overmodest,
But Khadija saw not Mohammed ibn Abdullah ibn Abd-ul Muttaleb—
Rather the Praised One, the expected One, the Comforter,
Prophesied and foretold in many tradition and record,
Who, still asleep, carried in his dreams the Message of God.