

Two Great Lies

~Other Speakers S-Z: James Stalker:

"Ye shall not surely die"
(Gen. 3:4).

The great tempter of men has two devices with which he plies us at two different stages. Before we have fallen, he tells us that one fall does not matter. it is a trifle; why should we not know the taste of the forbidden fruit? We can easily recover ourselves again. After we have fallen, on the contrary, he tells us that it is hopeless: we are given over to sin, and need not attempt to rise.

Both are false.

It is a terrible falsehood to say that to fall does not matter. Even by one fall there is something lost that can never be recovered. It is like the breaking of an infinitely precious vessel, which may be mended, but will never be again as if it had not been broken. And, besides, one fall leads to others; it is like going upon very slippery ice--even in the attempt to rise you are carried away again. Moreover, we give others a hold over us. If we have not sinned alone, to have sinned once involves a tacit pledge that we will sin again; and it is often almost impossible to get out of such a false position. God keep us from believing that to fall once does not matter!