



"The Prophet Zakariya (Zacharias) in a Tree", folio from a dispersed copy of the Falnama (Book of Omens)

Date

1550s–1560s

Primary Maker

Iranian

Medium

watercolor, ink, and gold on paper

Description

ascribed to Ja'fat al-Sadiq; From a dispersed copy of an extraordinarily large Falnama (Book of divination; including sayings to be used as omens and illustrations of the Old Testament, Prophets, Jesus and the Family of the Prophet Muhammed). Calligraphy on reverse in nastaliq script. The work was probably executed by the court artists of Shah Tahmasp. "The Prophet Zakariya escaped his pursuers by hiding in a tree that miraculously opened up to admit him, but the hem of his cloak was left protruding, and Iblis (the kneeling figure labeled "accursed Devil") betrayed him. The forces of the Devil sawed apart the tree and with it Zakariya, whose saintly aura is shown as flames bursting

from the branches."

Dimensions

59.4 x 44.8 cm (23 3/8 x 17 5/8 in.)