

**LEGENDS AND
TALES IN PROSE
AND VERSE**

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Legends and tales in prose and verse by Isabel E. Cohen

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ISABEL E. COHEN

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AND VERSE**

Legends and Tales

IN

Prose and Verse

Compiled by
Isabel E. Cohen



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The Birth of Man

A LEGEND OF THE TALMUD

BY EMMA LAZARUS

WHEN angels visit earth, the messengers
Of God's decree, they come as lightning,
wind:

Before the throne, they all are living fire.
There stand four rows of angels—to the right
The hosts of Michael, Gabriel's to the left,
Before, the troop of Ariel, and behind,
The ranks of Raphael; all, with one accord,
Chanting the glory of the Everlasting.
Upon the high and holy throne there rests,
Invisible, the majesty of God.
About His brows the crown of mystery
Whereon the sacred letters are engraved
Of the unutterable Name. He grasps
A sceptre of keen fire; the universe

Is compassed in His glance ; at His right hand
Life stands, and at His left hand standeth Death.

LL

Lo, the divine idea of making man
Had spread abroad among the heavenly hosts ;
And all at once before the immortal throne
Pressed troops of angels and of seraphim,
With minds opposed, and contradicting cries :
“ Fulfil, Great Father, Thine exalted thought!
Create and give unto the earth her king ! ”
“ Cease, cease, Almighty God ! create no more ! ”
And suddenly upon the heavenly sphere
Deep silence fell ; before the immortal throne
The angel Mercy knelt, and thus he spoke :
“ Fulfil, Great Father, Thine exalted thought !
Create the likeness of Thyself on earth.
In this new creature I will breathe the spirit
Of a divine compassion ; he shall be
Thy fairest image in the universe.”