

Tobit

Chapter 1

Tobit was a Jewish exile living in the city of Nineveh in Assyria. Even though other Jewish exiles, even his own relatives, neglected their religion, Tobit stayed loyal to God.

Tobit also cared for the poor and hungry. And he made a special practice of burying the dead.

Dear God, please help me to be like Tobit:
loyal to you and caring for the poor

Chapters 2, 3

One night when Tobit was resting, sparrow droppings fell into his eyes and he became blind. Some people made fun of Tobit for his misfortune. Tobit humbly entrusted his life to the Lord.

At the same time as Tobit was praying, Sarah was praying in the town of Media.

Sarah had been given in marriage 7 times but all of her bridegrooms had been killed by the demon Asmodeus before the couple could make love.

The Lord heard the prayers of Tobit and Sarah and sent the angel Raphael to help them.

Dear God, please help people
who are in difficult situations

Chapter 4

Tobit said to his son Tobias:

"When I die give me an honorable burial. Always honor your mother. When she dies, bury her at my side.

Be faithful to the Lord all your days.

Always be willing to help poor people.

Give your bread to those who are hungry and your clothes to those who are naked.

Ask advice of every wise person. Bless the Lord God in everything. Beg him to guide your ways and bring your paths and purposes to a successful conclusion.

Avoid all loose conduct.

Do to no one what you would not want done to you.

Choose a wife from our tribe, from our kin in Media.

Go to Media, to my friend Gabael. Many years ago I left 10 talents of silver with him. This money is yours."

Dear God, please guide me and help me to do what is right

Chapters 5, 6

Tobit told Tobias to find a trustworthy man to go with him to Media. Tobias found Raphael, but Tobias did not know Raphael was an angel.

On the first night of their journey, Tobias and Raphael caught a large fish. Raphael told Tobias to keep the gall, liver and heart of the fish.

Raphael explained that the gall would cure the blindness of Tobit, and that the liver and heart would drive away the demon Asmodeus.

Dear God, thank you for the help we receive from your angels

Chapter 7

When Tobias and Raphael reached Media, they went to the home of their relative Raguel, father of Sarah.

Tobias asked Raguel for Sarah to be his wife.

Raguel told Tobias that 7 previous bridegrooms had died.

Tobias repeated his request, and Sarah became his wife.

That night everyone prayed for the safety of the couple.

Dear God, please bless everyone being married this month

Chapter 8

Before Tobias went to bed with Sarah, he remembered what Raphael had said.

Tobias put some of the fish's heart and liver on burning incense. The smell of the fish made Asmodeus flee.

Tobias with Sarah then prayed to the Lord:

"You are blessed O God of our fathers.

Let the heavens and all creatures bless you, you who created Adam and Eve.

I now take Sarah as my wife

not for any lustful reason, but out of true love.

Please have pity on us and bring us to old age together."

Then they went to bed.

Meanwhile Raguel, who feared Tobias would die, prepared a secret grave.

But when Raguel sent a maid

to the room of Tobias and Sarah

the maid found they were alive and sleeping peacefully.

Then Raguel too praised God:

"Thank you, my God, for making me happy.

What I feared has not happened."

The next day Raguel prepared the customary 14 day wedding feast.

Dear God, thank you for the many times
when we could say "What I feared has not happened"

Chapters 9, 10

Tobias arranged that Raphael go to Gabael to collect the silver left by Tobit many years before. Gabael returned with Raphael to Raguel's house and joined the wedding feast. Realising that his parents would be worried about him, Tobias left for home as soon as the wedding feast was over. Raguel gave Tobias and Sarah half his possessions and prayed that he would see their children some day. A happy and grateful Tobias thanked God for all the blessings of his journey to Media.

Dear God, thank you for all the blessings of my life

Chapter 11

When Tobias returned home, his parents were full of joy. Tobias followed Raphael's instructions and applied the fish gall to his blind father's eyes. Tobias then peeled away a filmy skin from the eyes and his father Tobit was able to see again. Tobit and Tobias joyfully praised God. Tobit welcomed Sarah and held a banquet for all his friends.

Dear God, please give sight to the blind people I know,
just as you gave back sight to Tobit long ago

Chapter 12

When Tobit's banquet was finished, Tobit wanted to thank Raphael for all his help. Only then did Raphael tell Tobit and Tobias that he was an angel sent by God to help them.

"I am Raphael, one of the 7 angels who stand ever ready to enter the presence of the glory of the Lord.

Never tire of giving God thanks.

And never tire of helping the poor."

Raphael farewelled them, rose in the air, and left them.

They praised and thanked God for all he had done for them.

Dear God, thank you for all your love, all your blessings

Chapter 13

Tobit praised and thanked God in these words:

"Blessed be God who lives for ever,

declare his praise in every nation.

He is our Creator, our God, our Father.

Praise him for all his kindness to us.

My soul rejoices in the King of heaven.

Let his praise be sung in Jerusalem and in all nations."

Dear God, may you be known and loved

by all the peoples of the world,

since all people are your children

Chapter 14

Tobit was 62 when he went blind. He died when he was 112.

After he was cured of blindness,

he continued his custom of helping the poor.

Before he died he said to Tobias:

"Take your family and move to Media,

since Nineveh will soon see war and strife.

Serve God sincerely, always be willing to help poor people."

After Tobit and Anna died, Tobias moved to Media

and lived with Raguel his father in law.

Dear God, please help me imitate Tobit

in his kindness to poor people