

Session 10 · I Am Raphael

Tobit 12

What We Found

The hired man called father and son aside and gave the charge this study is named for: it is good to guard the secret of a king, but gloriously to reveal the works of God. Then the callback landed: Jesus, standing over a man born blind, spoke Tobit's thesis in John 9:3, that the works of God might be made manifest, and healed with anointing and command. God's hiddenness is strategic and temporary; its terminus is always revelation and praise, and gratitude is the secret's executor.

Raphael's triad, prayer with fasting, almsgiving, and righteousness, turned out to be the skeleton of Matthew 6 (when you give, when you pray, when you fast) and the architecture of every Lent (CCC 1434): not a menu but one organism, aimed at God, freeing the self, turned to neighbor.

We paid Session 4's debt in full: the sola fide objection to almsgiving delivers from death, and it will purge away every sin at its strongest. We conceded with both hands what is Catholic doctrine: no one merits the initial grace of justification (CCC 2010), and every purging of sin flows from Calvary alone. Then we pressed with the objector's own canon: Jesus (give for alms... and behold, everything is clean for you), Daniel, Proverbs, Peter (love covers a multitude of sins), and Matthew 25. The resolution is the Catholic doctrine of grace entire: charity is not a rival of the Cross but its current; grace-born love genuinely acts and genuinely counts, because God dignifies his children as real causes, and when God crowns our merits he crowns his own gifts (CCC 2011).

Then the unveiling: I brought a reminder of your prayer before the Holy One... when you buried the dead, I was likewise present with you... I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels who present the prayers of the saints. With our own hands we found the seven again, incense rising with the prayers of the saints, in Revelation 8:2-4, and answered 1 Timothy 2:5 honestly: heavenly intercession runs entirely inside Christ's one mediation, as Raphael himself insisted: I did not come as a favor on my part, but by the will of our God. Our prayers have couriers; our hidden obediences have witnesses; and the angel's last commands became the book itself: bless God for ever, and write in a book everything that has happened.

Voices of the Church

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Cyprian of Carthage · *On the Lord's Prayer* 32 (c. AD 252)

Teaching the Church to pray, Cyprian appeals directly to this chapter: Raphael the angel bears witness that prayer joined with fasting and almsgiving ascends and is heard, petitions reaching God swiftly when good works commend them. Not Tobit trivia: the Church's operating manual for prayer, certified by the courier.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Peter Chrysologus · *Sermon* 43 (5th century)

Prayer, mercy, and fasting: these three are one, and they give life to each other. Fasting is the soul

of prayer, mercy is the lifeblood of fasting; if you have only one of them or not all together, you have nothing. The Church still reads these lines every Lent.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Leo the Great · *Sermon 39, On Lent (c. AD 450)*

What each Christian owes God in every season is paid with special devotion in Lent through the triple remedy of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving: prayer seeks, fasting frees, and mercy gives what grace has given us. Every Lent you keep is Raphael's farewell discourse, structured by the Church for fifteen centuries.

Live It This Week

1. Draft a rule of the triad: one concrete practice of prayer, one of fasting, one of almsgiving, small enough to keep, written down, beginning this week. Bring it next session.
2. Practice revealed praise once: tell one person, out loud, one specific work of God in your life, using his name as the subject of the sentence. Guard your kings' secrets; reveal your God's works.
3. Read Tobit 13 before next session, aloud if you can. It is a hymn written by a man who got his eyes back. Notice what he does with the word Jerusalem, and what the streets are paved with.

Scripture Memory · Tobit 12:7 (RSV2CE)

"It is good to guard the secret of a king, but gloriously to reveal the works of God."

Before Next Session. Read Tobit 13, aloud if possible.

Catechism CCC 335 · CCC 1434 · CCC 1996 · CCC 2010-2011