

Session 12 · Reveal the Works of God

Tobit 14

What We Found

Tobit's last testament read history theologically: leave Nineveh, for what Jonah said will come true, the prophet of the spared city invoked over the city whose reprieve ran out. God's patience is real, and God's patience ends; the empire that made burial a crime went unburied into history's grave in 612 BC. And his hope kept honest books: a temple rebuilt, but the glorious building for all generations only when the times of the age are completed. Biblical hope is staged, already and not yet, and Tobit died mid-story, content, trusting hidden providence past his own horizon.

Then the prophecy we are sitting in: all the Gentiles will turn to fear the Lord God in truth, and will bury their idols. The line runs unbroken from a Nineveh deathbed through the Magi, the Great Commission, Thessalonian converts and Ephesian bonfires, to our own chairs: a room of Gentiles, idols long buried, studying Israel's Scriptures for love of Israel's Messiah. We are the book's evidence and its next installment.

Every thread came home: the works of God, hidden, revealed, sung, and now commissioned to us; Ahikar, the chapter 1 footnote, revealed as the book's control experiment, he gave alms and escaped the deathtrap, answering Anna's question (where are your charities?) with a completed case: here, delivering everyone in sight. And we met the last objection, that Scripture is a winners-only highlight reel, by opening the canon's own dark rooms: Psalm 88 ends unresolved, Lamentations grieves for five chapters, heaven's martyrs still pray how long. The tradition that chose Tobit also chose Psalm 88; Tobit shows with the veil lifted what Psalm 88 endures with the veil down, and Christian hope was never staked on statistics anyway: it is staked on Easter, the worst-ending story publicly resolved, the down payment on all the rest.

Then we obeyed the angel: pens out, and each of us wrote and revealed one work of God from our own history, because witness is the form of teaching the world has never learned to refute, and the book's last verb is ours now: and he blessed the Lord God for ever and ever.

Voices of the Church

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Justin Martyr · *Dialogue with Trypho* 41, 117 (c. AD 155)

A Gentile philosopher converted to the God of Israel testifies that in every place, among every people, Gentiles who once served idols now offer prayer and thanksgiving to the God and Father of all through the name of Jesus. Justin is Tobit 14:6 walking and arguing, a century after the Ascension.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Polycarp of Smyrna · *The Martyrdom of Polycarp* 14 (c. AD 155)

We opened this study with Polycarp quoting Tobit; we close with his death. Bound at the stake, the old bishop prays: I bless you, for you have counted me worthy of this day and this hour... I praise

you, I bless you, I glorify you. Like Tobit, he dies blessing; like Tobit's, his story was written in a book so the work of God stays revealed.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Paul VI · *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 41 (1975)

Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses. Witness is what gives teaching its credibility: a work of God revealed from inside a life opens ears that argument alone cannot open. The page you wrote tonight is that instrument.

Live It This Week

1. Read your written work of God to one person outside this group within the month. Witness opens the door that teaching then walks through.
2. Reread the whole book of Tobit in one sitting sometime this month, forty minutes, with everything you now know. Then put it where you will find it again in a dark season; it was written for exiles.
3. Keep the rule of the triad, keep one shovel-work of mercy in your ordinary weeks, and when the hidden season comes, remember what the courier said: your prayers are carried, your burials are witnessed, and the secret has an expiration date.

Scripture Memory · Tobit 14:11 (RSV2CE)

"So now, my children, consider what almsgiving accomplishes, and how righteousness delivers."

From Here On. There is no next session; there is your life. Reveal the works of God, gloriously.

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