

Tobit 12: 1. 5-15. 20

Mark 12: 35-37.

Faith, Goodness, Disaster, Prayer. Today's Reading marks the penultimate instalment of the story of Tobit in the Old Testament. In many ways it could be akin to the plots that run through books, television, or films that we might experience today!

Tobit, a good man who gives alms to help his fellow countrymen, has a son Tobias who, like his father, involves himself in caring for those in need. Then disaster strikes. Tobit is blinded in an unfortunate accident and Tobias falls foul of the authorities. Tobit's wife, Anna, has to take up 'woman's' work as a source of income. Her work is appreciated, and she is given a kid goat. Tobit is anxious that others may think it is stolen and he tells Anna to return it. Such a gift would represent wealth they do not have. So, Anna reminds him of his own generosity in times past. Tobit pleads with God for help. At the same time, some distance away, a young woman called Sarah, lives with her father Raguel. Sarah has been the victim of a cruel curse. Seven times she has been given in marriage and, each time, her bridegrooms have died on the wedding night. Her maids suspect her of killing them. In desperation Sarah contemplates suicide, relenting only out of concern for her father. She too turns to earnest prayer. God responds to the entreaties of Tobit and Sarah. Thus, later, it happened that Tobit and his son are taken by God's envoy, the angel Raphael, to Raguel's house. Raguel generously welcomes them. Having eaten, Raguel overhears Tobias' desire to marry his daughter. He accepts the proposal but warns Tobias of the probable consequences. Tobias, for his part is determined. Left alone with Sarah, the two pray together and then lay down for the night.

Today we read of the results of faith, goodness, and prayer in the eye of disaster. Tobit is cured of his blindness. Tobias has successfully retrieved the families' stolen silver in his travels and, now, he brings Sarah to his house to be blessed and welcomed by his father.

From Psalm 32....”The Lord looks on those who revere him, on those who hope in his love, to rescue their souls from death, to keep them alive in famine.”

Oh; if you want confirmation of this, read tomorrows Reading from Tobit!