

# Preface

The book of Tobit has known during the past years a renewed interest within the world of biblical studies; for so long underestimated, either for theological reasons (the book in fact is not considered canonical either by Judaism or by the Churches of the Reformation) or for a mistaken conviction of the poor literary quality of the story narrated in the book. In reality, Tobit's narrator is never trivial; often capable of irony and always able to offer to its readers/listeners a lively and never predictable story. Furthermore, the book of Tobit, shows itself evermore an important witness of the situation of Diaspora Hebraism between the III and II centuries BCE and thus also important at historical level. In relation to the Hebrew Bible, Tobit offers an intriguing rereading of several biblical texts. In that regard, an intertextual approach to it reveals itself also fruitful.

The book of José Lucas Brum Teixeira constitutes a revised version of the doctoral dissertation he defended in 2017 at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome. In his work, the author faces up the exegesis of chapter 6 of Tobit, a truly key and central chapter of the book. In it, young Tobiah is forced to detach himself from his father Tobit and, on a travel under the guidance of Azariah (angel Raphael in human form), he goes through a journey that leads him to marriage with Sarah and later to heal his own father. In the panorama of Tobit's studies, there lacked a work of this magnitude on such key a chapter.

An important achievement of Brum Teixeira's study is in my opinion the ability to combine a classical approach (meaning historical-critical) with an attentive and fruitful narrative analysis which brings to light unexpected details of the text helping the reader to better understand aspects of Tobit 6 otherwise obscure, also helping to better grasp the place of chapter 6 in the framework of the whole book of Tobit. Not only that: on several occasions, the author employs in a fruitful manner an intertextual approach, a case in point being the sections regarding the relationship between Tob 6 and Gen 22 and between Tob 6 and the book of Jonah.

Finally, the author offers an up-to-date and complete bibliography, which often goes far back in time. Some details of Tob 6 are carefully examined through *excursus* that are of interest even of the most demanding scholars. In this regard is worthy seeing the analysis offered on Tobiah's dog, the fish and its heart, liver and gall, elements of great significance as the story unfolds thereon.

We hope the reader will find this book a good companion, to take him on an initiatory journey similar to that of Tobiah!

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