

The Play of the Angel Raphael and Tobit

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Editions:

- A *Incomincia la festa dell'Angiolo Raphaello et di Tobbia*. ([Florence: Antonio Miscomini, c. 1484.]) BNCF Palatino P.6.36.1
- B *Rappresentatione del Angiol Raphaello* (Florence: [Tubini and Ghirlandi] for Maestro Francesco di Giovanni Benvenuto, sta dal canto de' Biscari, 11 July 1516). BL 11426.33.23
- C *Rapresentatione del Angiol Raphaello* (Florence: n.p., 1546). Palatino E.6.5.1^{1.15}.
- D *Sacre rappresentazioni dei secoli XIV, XV e XVI* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1872), 1:97–128.

The present translation is based on Miscomini's edition of c. 1484 (A). Although D'Ancona indicates that he used this text, his edition has more in common with C, which derives directly from B rather than A.

Translation prepared in conjunction with paper entitled "Journey and Place in the Florentine Plays of Tobit," presented to symposium "Mediating Scripture: Judeo-Persian Tobit as Global Crossroads," Abu Dhabi, 8–9 December 2021.

Characters

THE ANGEL *who speaks the prologue and epilogue*
 AN AMBASSADOR *sent by General of the King's army*
 THE KING *of the Medes and Persians*
 ALEXANDER, *his page*
 BELISARIUS, *his General*
 A BARON *in the court of the King*
 TOBIT, *of the tribe of Naphtali*
 ANNA, *his wife*
 TOBIAS, *his son*
 PRISONERS *who do not speak*
 GABAEI, *a poor kinsman of Tobit*
 ANOTHER KINSMAN *of Tobit*
 GOD THE FATHER
 THE ANGEL RAPHAEL, *dressed as a traveller, and called AZARIA*
 SARAH, *daughter of Raguel*
 ZITA, *her slave*
 RAGUËL
 ANNA, *his wife, sister of the other Anna*
 THE DEMON
 MARTINO *and ARRIGHETTO, servants of Raguel*
 TOBIAS'S DOG

Places

ASSYRIA
 NINEVEH¹
 THE COURT OF THE KING
 THE HOUSE OF TOBIT
 THE PRISON
 THE SQUARE
 THE MOUNTAIN
 THE RIVER TIGRIS
 THE HOUSE OF RAGUEL, *with the bedchamber of Sarah*

 MEDIA
 RHAGES
 THE HOUSE OF GABAEI
 HEAVEN

¹ Nineveh corresponds to Mosul in modern Iraq, located on the eastern bank of the Tigris River; and Rhages to Tehran in Iran, 927 km to the east. There is no indication, however, that the dramatist and his audience had a real sense of geographical location. Ecbatana is mentioned only once in the Vulgate and not at all in the play. "Rages posita est in Monte Ecbatana" in the Vulgate (Tobit 5:8), becomes "Rages citta de' Medi, la quale è posta in monte e piaggie" in the fourteenth-century translation contained in BNCF, ms. Palatino 1, and "Ragès ... ch'a piè del monte Arabia posta è propria" in the play (57.5–6).

Play of the Angel Raphael and of Tobit

*Here begins the play of the Angel Raphael and of Tobit. And first THE ANGEL announces:*²

1. Our dear beloved fathers and dear brethren,
we do beseech you, for the love of God,
that while you're in these cloisters, gathered here,
you meditate devoutly and stay quiet.
The efforts are all ours, the pleasures yours,
and everything we do is spurred by love.
We've gathered you together in these hills
to flee the crazy pastimes of this day.

2. We'll show you now a very noble tale,
that's to be found in the Old Testament.
Let those who wish to know the Holy Writ
now turn their ears intently to our words.
And those who seek true joy and great delight
should live like Tobit, mirror in himself
of love and charity and hope and faith,
who gave all his possessions to the poor.

3. First you will see how he was led away
as a prisoner in chains to Nineveh;
and later, liberated by the King,
he cared with great compassion for the poor,
and when he'd given everything for God,
yet greater tribulation came on him.
Impoverished and old, he became blind
one day, and still praised God for everything.

4. Almighty God, who is supremely just
and never leaves his servants on their own,
transformed his sorrow into joyfulness,
by sending him the Angel Raphael.
You who desire true happiness and bliss,
seek it in God, and not among us here.
Now pluck from all of this the choicest fruits,
so that we all may meet again in Heav'n.

*AN AMBASSADOR arrives, sent by the General of the King's
army, and says to the King:*

5. Most serene King, we come to you and bear
good tidings with the greatest happiness.
Your general, Belisarius the great,

² The first two stanzas are constructed on the same template as the first two stanzas of *Josef, figliuol di Jacob*.

has overcome the Hebrews, every man,
and routed them on mountaintop and plain,
and sends word to your worthy majesty
that he seeks always just to do your will,
and asks what you wish done with those he's captured.

THE KING *to the Ambassador*:

6. Go back and tell my worthy general,
that great rewards will come to him, since he
by artifice and by might and by skill
has brought us glory and triumph so great.
He should leave trusted guards throughout the realm
and then return in triumph and should send
to Nineveh³ as many as he can
as captives, men and women, young and old.

THE KING *continues and creates a page and says*:

7. And you, good Alexander, step up here
and understand and recognise your luck,
for you have been selected from all these
to be my page and take care of my sword,
and sometimes you'll be called upon to sing,
and in good measure let it all be done;
I'm certain that you'll do just as I've said
and make sure that you never leave my sight.

ALEXANDER *replies*:

8. Almighty, excellent, and glorious king,
I come to you,⁴ and I indeed am sure
that Fortune's guided me and brings me here
to this great kindness that I don't deserve
But that great virtue that shines forth from you
has shown me with open clarity
that you do bear me a most special love
such that I'll always strive to do you honour.

Now GENERAL BELISARIUS *arrives with lots of prisoners and says*:

9. Great king of the Assyrians and the Medes,
may Jove preserve you, and the other gods!
All of these prisoners that you see here now
I've brought from the dominions of the Jews.
Jerusalem, Samaria, Galilee
we have forced to submit beneath your feet.
Now you can rule the world in every part
because you're favoured by both Sol and Mars.

³ AB: anni noue *for* a Nineve, a typical failure to recognise even a familiar place name.

⁴ A: uegho uerso di me'; B: uegno uerso di me; I amend to: vengo verso di te

THE KING *replies*:

10. O worthy Belisarius, we know
your virtue and affection and your love.
Whatever prize or salary you ask
we'll give to you, as your just recompense.
I do not wish that anything should come
between the two of us in victory.
May it please you to rest a while with me.
And you, take all these captives off to prison.

Once they are in prison, THE KING says:

11. Among those people, go, seek out a Jew
of the tribe of Levi, Tobit by name,
and bring him here to me without delay,
together with his wife and son, for I
have heard he is a just and prudent man:
When men are good, it's folly to do harm
to them; a king who wants his rule to last
must punish evil and reward the good.

A BARON goes to the prison and calls Tobit and says:

12. Tobit, listen to this good news I bring:
fbetter than this you couldn't even ask.
His Royal Majesty has sent for you
and orders that you leave this prison now.

TOBIT *replies*:

Well do I see that God does not forsake
those who love him and pray with all their heart.
O Lord of Heav'n, praise be to you always
for granting one so worthless such reward.

They are brought before the King and made to kneel, and THE KING says to Tobit:

13. Tobit, come here, because I have been told
that you are upright, merciful, and good,
and never have offended against me.
Since I'm a friend of good men such as you,
and since I know that you are very poor,
accept, besides your liberty, this gift.
Make sure you stay away from wars, and live
wherever you desire in all my realm.

After the King gives Tobit a purse full of money, TOBIT thanks him still kneeling:

14. I give you thanks, exalted Emperor,
that he preserve you in your life and lustre,
and increase your kingdom blithe and fair.
and to increase your realm, joyous and fair.

I'll serve you faithfully for evermore,
 and in obedience, that's my firm desire,
 and so, until the end of all my days,
 Your Majesty's good servant I shall be.

TOBIT departs with his wife and son, and when they arrive at their place, he fills a basket with bread and four flasks of wine and says to Tobias:

15. My son, here is a basket with some flasks
 to take to those poor men who are in prison.
 The man who in this life comforts the poor
 will garner great rewards then in the next.
 He who wants God to open heaven's gates
 to him, and to forgive him all his sins,
 should clothe the naked, give the hungry food,
 visit the sick and those who are in prison.

When he comes to the prisoners,⁵ TOBIT says to them:

16. Fathers and brothers, I bid you good day
 and urge you to be patient with your lot.
 Many scourges are punishment for sin,
 it's good to do our penance here on earth.
 We were ungrateful and unthankful too,
 without due fear and without reverence
 to our great God who is the Highest Good
 and, therefore, we deserve this suffering.

* * *

TOBIT leaves the prison and goes to visit Gabael:⁶

17. Good day to you, dear brother Gabaël!
 How are you and what news of all your kin?
 I was trying to get some news of you,
 and asked a lot of folk for word of you.

GABAEEL replies:

We are all healthy, praise be unto God.
 Of worldly goods we have but little left,
 and that little's been taken from my hands,
 and both this year and last I lost my crop.

He continues:

18. Worse still, they've put special tax on me:
 ten talents, that I'm now obliged to pay.
 You never saw a greater scourge than this!

⁵ Although Tobias does not speak, the stage directions indicates that he accompanies Tobit.

⁶ Gabael is in "distant Rhages, city of the Medes"; his *luogo* must be located beyond that of Raguel.

See what these cruel people do to us!

TOBIT *replies*:

Dear Gabaël, you know what I would say:
let us be glad of what God wants for us.
He has allowed it for our trespasses,
because we were ungrateful and too proud.

He continues:

19. Brother, you know how long ago our race
was liberated from the hands of Pharaoh
who held them captive in such slavery.
He guided them into the Promised Land
but those ungrateful people defied heaven
and rebelled against God so many times.
He led them out of Egypt's tribulation,
for forty years he fed them in the desert.

He continues:

20. There are no people underneath the stars
that owe a greater debt to the Lord God
than did our people, sons of Israël,
for help and gifts that God has given them.
He gave us cities, rich and beautiful,
and fertile land, endowed with all good things.
What more could God in justice do for us?
And still "My People" was his name for us.

GABAEEL *says to Tobit*:

21. Tobit, I do admit you tell the truth.
We do deserve this torment, and more still.
But when I recollect what once I was
and what I am today, it breaks my heart.
I'm truly worried now about that tax,
I know I'll be arrested violently;
I can't see how I'll find the means to pay:
I've nothing left that I can sell or pawn.

TOBIT *replies to Gabael*:

22. Just see how merciful our Lord God is,
for he has wanted us to meet today!
His faithful will not ever be forsaken,
he'll not abandon those who trust in him.
This money here I want to lend to you,
God has permitted I should have it here,
but for it I would like in your own hand
a promise to repay me or my heirs.

GABAEEL *replies to Tobit*:

23. Tobit, if you will make this gift to me,

it's as if you have snatched me from the grave.
 Though I'm already much obliged to you,
 I, Gabaël, will all the more be bound.
 A man who has a friend as good as you
 should hold him dear, far better than a brother.
 And rest assured that I'll repay it all,
 and give that undertaking in my hand.

Once he has the paper, Tobit takes his leave of Gabael and returns home.

* * *

[TOBIT] *calls Tobias and says:*

24. Come here, Tobias, O my dear sweet son.
 Go round the city, seeking high and low,
 if you can find just one God-fearing man,
 and if there's one, a member of our tribe,
 bring him back with you, with a pious mind,
 and in the meantime, have a meal prepared.
 My son, it is our duty to give thanks
 for what we have and share it with the poor.

TOBIAS goes and seeks out the poor; and he finds a man who has been killed in the square and he goes home to his father and says:

25. Father, alas, I've seen down in the square
 a miserable wretch who has been killed.
 The man who did it wasn't recognised,
 and with no one to comfort him, he died.
 My heart is grieving on account of this,
 seeing the torments and injustices
 inflicted on us by these infidels,
 who treat us worse than wolves or dogs could do.

TOBIT replies:

26. My son, I couldn't eat or drink a thing
 unless I went first went down into the square;
 The body of that man must be removed
 and taken to be buried this same night.

ANNA, hearing that Tobit wants to bring the body home, for fear of the King, says to Tobit:

Tobit, you want to get us into trouble
 because if King Sennacherib finds out,
 you know how very greatly we're despised
 among these people, so accursed and cruel.

ONE OF TOBIT'S RELATIONS says to him:

27. You're still so very simple and so pure

that you believe evil can be made good.⁷
 You say you are protected by this God
 and yet you are beset by many trials.
 It's made you grow so thin and sallow-faced,
 your skin is barely hanging on your bones.
 This God of yours has worse in store for you,
 and still you call him just and merciful.

TOBIT says to his wife:

28. Wife, a man who wants God as his friend
 must labour very hard to win his love.
 He who seeks joy and gladness in this life
 will in the next life find eternal woe.
 Blessed is he who dies for what is right
 for he will be rewarded by the Lord.
 If we have laboured for the Lord our God,
 in heaven we'll receive our pay from him.

*Tobit and Tobias go into the square and collect the body and
 carry it home and during the night they bury it.*

* * *

*Then, as Tobit is sitting in the room and looking up to Heaven
 and contemplating, a swallow drops faeces that land on his face
 and he is immediately blinded. TOBIT calls his wife and says:*

29. Anna, come here and see if you can tell
 what's fallen on my face. I felt it fall
 on me out of the sky moments ago,
 and now it's made my eyes completely blind.

ANNA replies to Tobit:

Tobit, this God of yours has served you right,
 for all day long you say he loves you well,
 and every day I see and know for sure:
 the more good a man does, the worse he's treated.

TOBIT reproaches her and says:

30. Stop saying things like that, for all the works
 of our great God are done in righteousness
 and all the pain and travail I endure
 is the result of my own sinfulness.
 Praise be to you, my Lord, for ever more,
 for punishing my wickedness down here.
 I give you thanks and ask that you should grant
 me, in your mercy, patience in such pain.

⁷ AB chel mal sifacci bene D che 'l mal ti facci bene.

He continues:

31. Anna, what do you hear? Is that a kid?
 Look and make sure it's not been stolen one.
 Nothing would give me more dismay than that,
 and there's no way I could have eaten it.
 I'm sure I've said a thousand times and more,
 that stealing stuff is far too great a sin.
 I'd sooner die of hunger than transgress
 the laws that our Lord God has given us.

ANNA replies to Tobit:

32. You're still obsessed by these absurd ideas;
 if you cling to this folly, you will die.
 No other family is as badly off,
 o woe is me, as my poor family is.
 The alms you've given, what good are they now
 and all the property you've thrown away?
 If I've counted it rightly, all you've earned
 is to find yourself old and blind and poor.

She continues:

33. Where are the dead you buried? And the goods
 you gave away to people you don't know?
 And all the naked people that you clothed?
 Not one of them would share a loaf with you.
 People like you are ridiculed and scorned.
 You see how all your hopes are come to nought?
 He who casts his belongings to the mob
 later finds himself old and poor and mad.

TOBIT replies to his wife:

34. Alas, my wife, what are these words I hear
 spoken with wrath and with such foolishness?
 For every one we've given, we'll receive
 a hundredfold, from our Lord God on high.
 I now regret that I've not given more!
 I do not seek the riches of this world.
 A greedy man gets what he wants on earth
 and for eternity gets grief and woe.

He continues:

35. This life on earth lasts but a little time
 it's less than nothing, compared to the next.
 Sensual pleasure is an empty game
 it brings you joy not even one whole day.
 We have to find some other place to live –
 believe me, wife, I'm telling you the truth.
 Don't you be believe we are the sons of saints?
 We must resemble them in every way.?

He continues:

36. Don't you remember that our patriarchs
endured much suffering for our Lord God?
It's necessary for each man to strive
hard and assist his neighbours lovingly.
Make sure you never say such words again,
Ask God's forgiveness with a humble heart
and put your faith in him who rules us all
that in eternal life he'll make us rich.

* * *

*Now the story continues with Sarah, daughter of Raguel, who
has had seven husbands and they all died; and when a slave,
called Zita, comes home, SARAH says to her as follows:*

37. The Lord be praised that finally you've come!
Zita, you really are a piece of work!
You left the house more than four hours ago.
You never know when it's time to come home.

ZITA replies:

Whenever I come home you always grumble.
May God send down a curse on all your days.

SARAH says:

Zita, you've stuck your horns out way too far.
If Raguel comes home, I'm telling him.

ZITA replies:

38. Just do the worst that you can do to me.
You and your mother are two of a kind!
You shouldn't even dare to say a word,
you silly, witless, crazy little girl.
I have the urge to raise a hue and cry!
Each husband that she's had, she's killed them all!
What joy! The seven husbands that she's had
it's her fault that they perished, all of them!

*Now SARAH, hearing such abuse hurled at her, goes off to her
room alone and says humbly:*

39. I pray for blessing on you, Lord on high,
and blessing on the power that you wield;
and blessing on your name for evermore,
and blessing on the wisdom you possess,
I pray for blessing on your holy rule,
I pray for blessing on your clemency,
I pray for blessing on your righteousness,
and on your pity, mercy, charity.

She continues:

40. Dear Lord, you see all things and understand
our works and all the secrets of our hearts.
You alone, Lord, stand there in my defence,
you are the fount of pity, sea of love.
Do with me now whatever you see fit
and put an end at last to all my woe.
Rescue me, God, from infamy and shame
and slander, you alone who know the truth.

She continues:

41. Give succour, Lord, to my bewildered soul
lost in this vale so full of misery.
Grant that this prayer of mine be heard on high.
I do beseech you, serene Majesty.
If there's no other way, just take my life
so that death puts an end to all my pain.
I do beseech you, Lord God of our fathers,
show your pity descending down on me.

* * *

Now GOD THE FATHER calls the Angel Raphael and says to him:

42. O Raphael, go forth into the city
of Nineveh, and to my servant Tobit,
and in the square you'll come upon his son
who's going round in search of company.
And you will be his guide along the way
and take him safe and sound, both there and back.
And you'll rest with Raguël along the way,
and see that he takes Sarah as his bride.

43. For Sarah's tears together with her prayers
and her pure soul, so humble and so clear,
and the charity shown to everyone
by Tobit, my most faithful, perfect servant,
the alms that he has given: these are why
of all his pain is turned into delight.
Let no one who shows mercy fear to die:
I'll give him rest in this world and in heaven.

* * *

*Now the story returns to TOBIT who, finding himself blind and
old and impoverished and in great ruin, kneels with his face to
heaven and says:*

44. Almighty God, creator of all things,
who made me in the likeness of yourself,
my Lord look not upon my iniquity
nor on my ignorance and thanklessness.

Because I have not loved you as I should,
 this bitter state I'm in is well-deserved.
 For failing to abide by your commands,
 I've earned my place in hell's eternal pain.

He continues:

45. O my Lord God, you are true righteousness
 and all your judgements are in like wise just.
 For our sins and for our wickedness
 we're scattered through the world and left forlorn;
 in death and in imprisonment and woe,
 we don't deserve pardon at all from you.
 I know for certain, for our trespasses
 all nations of the world persecute us.

He continues:

46. Therefor I pray you, great eternal God,
 to liberate me from this earthly life.
 Pray, grant my spirit peace, for death would be
 far better, and departure from this life.
 Pray, lead me forth from this most wicked world
 and bring this erring soul back home to peace.
 Do this, my Lord, if it is your desire;
 and yet, in any case, your will be done.

At this point, Sarah and Tobit are heard by God, and they are rewarded by God, and TOBIT sits down and talks to his son, and makes his will, instructing him what he must do:

47. Come here, Tobias, my beloved son,
 and hear the words your father has to say.
 My life will soon be drawing to a close:
 on your account alone this weighs on me,
 because my soul is all bound up with you.
 When my Creator wills, I shall depart,
 and when, my son, you see that I have died,
 you'll give my body proper burial.

He continues:

48. My son, honour your mother with great love:
 with pain and effort she has nurtured you;
 and always live by your own sweat and toil,
 and be prudent and just and temperate;
 and, above all, be fearful of the Lord.
 Take care to keep yourself away from sin,
 and be gracious towards the humble poor,
 for God much loves the man who's merciful.

He continues:

49. From the poor never turn your face away,
 and willingly distribute alms to them,

for there is nothing pleases God so much
 as the man who is generous with alms,
 for God will welcome you with open arms,
 make him the focus of your every thought.
 Beware of avarice, God's enemy,
 and pay your labourers for what they work.

He continues:

50. Have no desire for fame or wealth on earth
 which last but little time in this blind life.
 Seek only to attain the highest realm
 there where the good find glory infinite.
 The truest joy and highest happiness
 await the soul in virtue's mantle clothed.
 And, above all, remember this, sweet son,
 be sure to always fear and love the Lord.

He continues:

51. And one last thing, Tobias, I must say:
 you know and see full well how poor we are,
 and so I want to send you on your trip
 to distant Rhages, city of the Medes,
 where Gabaël, our relative, resides.
 Go to his house and ask on my behalf
 for those ten talents that I lent to him.
 I'm sure that he will pay them back to you.

TOBIAS replies:

52. Eternal father, I'm always prepared
 to obey everything that you command,
 and will set out at once, if you so wish.
 but there's one thing that causes me concern.
 This Gabaël will greet me with the words:
 "I know you not" or "Who has sent you here?"
 I've never been to visit him before,
 he hasn't ever seen me, nor I him.

TOBIT replies:

53. My son, I have the paper that he wrote
 in his own hand, that you can take with you..
 I'm sure your journey will not be in vain.
 You'll show it to him, and without delay
 he'll pay you; but the journey will be cruel.
 You'll have to find some guide to show the way.
 Were you to make this journey all alone,
 I'd be left waiting full of fear and woe.

He continues:

54. So search the city, see if you can find
 someone who's travelling to that far land,

and promise him that you will pay him well
with your own money, and pay all his costs.
And if you do find someone going there,
bring him for me to tell him all about
the land, and meanwhile I'll pray to the Lord
that he will grant you worthy company.

*TOBIAS leaves and goes to the square and finds the Angel
Raphael, dressed as a traveller, and TOBIAS goes up to him and
greets him and says:*

55. God save you, O most courteous young man!
I pray you kindly listen to my words.
Since I can see you're ready to set out,
tell me what country you are going to.

THE ANGEL replies to Tobias:

I'll tell you, since it pleases you to know:
My journey is a very distant one
and as you see I'm ready to set out
and travel to the city of the Medes.

TOBIAS replies:

56. Brother, if it turned out you knew the road
that goes to Rhages, I would come with you.
If you would like to have my company,
I'd give you a fair price and pay you well.

THE ANGEL replies:

Media, Arabia, Persia and Syria,
the kingdoms of Egypt and of the Chaldees,
I've sailed the ocean everywhere and more,
and even to the Earthly Paradise.

He continues:

57. There is no city, province, nor yet realm
in all of Asia, Africa, or Europe
that I don't know down to the very last,
because I've seen it all and in some depth.
If Rhages is where you intend to go,
right at the foot of Mount Arabia,⁸
my brother, I will get you safely there,
and I know Gabaël, your relative.

TOBIAS replies:

58. O brother, would you kindly wait here then
for me to go and tell my father this.
He sent me out just now to find someone

⁸ The Vulgate calls this Ecbatana, but there is no trace of that name in the play.

who knew the roads that travel through those parts.

THE ANGEL *replies*:

Be quick about it, for I want to leave
and make sure that you tell him everything.
I urge you, brother, be obedient,
and don't depart unless he gives you leave.

TOBIAS *leaves and returns to his father and says to him*:

59. Dear father, I have found a man out there,
a noble youth, both courteous and wise,
who seems to have been born in Paradise,
compassionate, and he knows all the roads.
He seems well-travelled, right throughout the world,
he knows the languages of every place,
and he's explored the world from west to east,
and all his words seem full of holiness.

TOBIT *replies to Tobias*:

60. Now you can see, my son, that our great God
does not abandon those who trust in him.
And you can truly trust, my dearest son,
that in his mercy God sent him to you.
It is blind folly to seek our delight
in the false world, whose role is to deceive.
Now go, my son, and ask him if he will
most kindly come and speak to me in here.

TOBIAS *goes and finds the Angel and says*:

61. Brother, just as I told you here before,
my father sent me to look for a guide,
and now he's told me that it's his great wish,
and if you would, he'd like to talk to you.
In the name of our everlasting God,
I beg you, come and see him in my home.

THE ANGEL *replies*:

It isn't in my nature to refuse.
I am happy to oblige: come on, let's go.

When they arrive at the house, THE ANGEL says to Tobit:

62. May Heav'n's creator grant you happiness
and keep you, father, in the best of health.

TOBIT *replies*:

May happiness be yours with sweetest joy.
You see what misery you find me in
and how I am reduced in my old age,
since I'm deprived of seeing heaven's light.
God who is just and good permitted it

because I'm a great sinner in this life.

THE ANGEL *replies to Tobit*:

63. Take comfort, father, in the Lord our God
for in a little while you will be cured.

TOBIT *replies*:

I pray you, tell me now, would you be willing
to guide Tobias all the way to Rhages,
where there's a man who has a debt to us,
a relative of ours, named Gabaël?
You will receive such payment on return
that you, my son, will be very content.

THE ANGEL *replies*:

64. Have no fear, Tobit, on your son's account:
I'll take him, without any risk of harm,
because I know the road to Rhages well,
and safe and sound I'll bring his back to you.

TOBIT *says to the Angel*:

Do me a favour, if you'd be so kind,
and just this one last question answer me.
My son, you are so courteous and polite,
what country are you from, and from what tribe?

THE ANGEL *replies to Tobit*:

65. Well now, you want to know a hireling's birth?
Father, what use to you is knowing this?
But, to resolve this longing that you have,
and since you'd like to know just who I am,
I will not keep my name hidden from you.,
Azaria is the name by which I'm known,
and of great Ananias I am son.

TOBIT *replies*:

66. Your lineage, my son, is surely great
and in your worthy bearing well expressed.
Nobility and wisdom mark your speech,
which is made finer by true eloquence.
So now, my sons, set out upon your way,
in the name of our God most merciful,
and here, Tobias, take this letter too.
And may God's angel keep you company.

ANNA, *Tobit's wife, hearing that her son is leaving, says*:

67. Oh, woe is me, what sorrow and mischance!
What great unhappiness besets my life!
I'm totally bereft of all good things,
now that my sweetest son is forced to leave.

There is no other woman in the world
 who suffers pain as infinite as mine.
 Alas, my sweetest son, where are you bound?
 I greatly fear I won't see you again.

She continues:

68. How much better it would have been for us
 if we'd not had to get those talents back,
 and been content to live in poverty
 and still been able to see my dear son.
 I am afraid that you feel no remorse
 and fortune will repay what you deserve.
 Accursèd money, how much pain you cause
 for you have taken from me my dear son.

* * *

*Tobias and the Angel set out on foot and they see a great river
 and TOBIAS says to the Angel:*

69. What's this river I see, so fast and full
 of water that it waters this whole plain?

THE ANGEL *replies to Tobias:*

This is the Tigris, river of great fame
 that rises in the Earthly Paradise.
 Brother, I'd like for us to rest for a while
 and in this river let us bathe our feet.
 Those who have far to go, as we two do,
 must take a break and rest from time to time.

*Tobias takes off his shoes and goes into the water and at once a
 great fish appears and TOBIAS, taking fright at it, says to the
 Angel:*

70. Alas, brother, I've seen a fish appear
 that seems to want to set itself on me,
 leaping out of the water, open-mouthed,
 and looking like it wants to swallow me.

THE ANGEL *replies:*

Fear not, it does this as the water rises
 and it tries to escape the river's flood.
 Go up to it and grab it by the gills⁹
 and put it on the bank, up on dry land.

*Tobias grabs the fish and puts it on dry part of the river bank
 and THE ANGEL says to him:*

71. Cut the fish open quickly, and remove

⁹ AB per gli orecchi; the vernacular sources have 'branche', an archaic form of 'branchie' (gills).

the liver that you find, and gall, and heart,
 and put it for safe keeping in your bag
 because it's good for curing every ill.
 You'll carry these things with you on the way.
 Do what I say and do not be afraid.
 And you can cook one portion of that fish,
 the other part that's left we'll take with us.

When TOBIAS has cut the fish open, he asks the Angel what they are good for:

72. Brother Azaria, tell me something now
 and don't refuse me for my simple words:
 my mind is always eager to learn more.
 What are they good for, these parts of the fish?

THE ANGEL replies:

I would be rude if I were to refuse.
 Part of the heart, divided from the lungs,
 if it is placed on top of burning coals,
 will chase away the Devil and his wiles.

He continues:

73. Tobias, listen well to what I say:
 You see that city?¹⁰ Fix it in your mind.
 There dwells a man who'll offer us his home.
 His name is Raguël, he's of your tribe,
 extremely rich, a just and perfect man.
 He's of your tribe, a close relation too.
 He also has a daughter, still a maid,
 most wise and gentle, virtuous and fair.

He continues:

74. As soon as we're admitted to his house,
 you are to ask that she should be your bride.
 He's kind and he is prudent and humane:
 if you marry her, it will all be yours.
 Your journey, brother, won't have been in vain
 along this road so long and difficult.
 When you've taken this woman as your wife,
 you'll return wealthy to your father's house.

TOBIAS replies to the Angel:

75. O Azaria, I have heard it said
 she's taken seven husbands to her bed.
 When the time came to go to sleep with her,
 they died, each one of them, a dreadful death.
 I would not wish for such a awful fate

¹⁰ In the Vulgate and the Italian translations, the city where Raguël lives is not given.

to come upon me, as it did on them.
 If this were how I were to meet my end,
 my father would renounce all hope in life.

He continues:

76. My father only has one single son,
 and I am he, and with much bitterness
 he remains with my mother, all alone,
 in blindness, poverty, and great old age.
 I would not wish to make his sorrow worse
 by going off in to look for worldly wealth.
 I would not wish that, siezed by avarice,
 I made him die in sorrow and in woe.

THE ANGEL *replies:*

77. I will explain, Tobias, so you know
 just why those seven came to their sad end.
 Pleasure was all they sought and vain delight,
 with bestial, unbridled appetite.
 They had no fear at all of our great God
 and lusted for the pleasures of the flesh,
 with no respect for wedlock's holiness,
 one and all they were driven¹¹ by the Devil.

He continues:

78. I have a remedy to this for you:
 you'll spend three nights down on your knees, to flee
 from evil thought and risk of tedium,
 and you will offer humble prayers to God.
 In order to avoid the Devil's snares
 you'll place the heart¹² upon the burning coals,
 since you know, as I told you on the way,
 it chases off the Devil and his wiles.

They come to Raguel and THE ANGEL says:

79. May God almighty save you, gentle sir!
 We're looking for Raguel and for his house.

RAGUEL *replies:*

I'm at your service: I am Raguël.
 I bid you welcome, to the two of you.

THE ANGEL *replies:*

We've come from very far away to see
 you personally, and ask you if you would
 most kindly give us lodging in your house,
 and from this you will have joy and delight.

¹¹ A sforzati BCD strozzati; but compare Tobit 6:17: "habet potestatem daemonium super eos."

¹² Tobit 6.19 has *jecure* (liver); Pal. 1 has *core*.

RAGUEL *takes them by the hand and shows them into the house saying:*

80. Come right in, for the pleasure is all mine,
and praise be to the Lord for everything.
I've always welcomed travellers and done
honour to them whatever way I could.
There is no greater pleasure I could have,
nor greater joy I could feel in my heart.
You're tired, why don't you go and rest a while
and wait for me a moment patiently.

RAGUEL *calls his wife and says:*

81. Anna, come here, and you, my daughter, too.
Summon the servants and give orders for
our supper, and as soon as possible,
so that this pair of visitors can eat.

ANNA, *the wife of Raguel, replies:*

One of them's just like Tobit in his ways
and in his looks and in the way he speaks.

RAGUEL *replies:*

Dear wife, I'm thinking over what you've said.
You're right: the younger lad is just like him.

RAGUEL *says to Tobias and the Angel:*

82. My sons, you are both very welcome here,
and in the meantime, while you sit with me,
there's something that I'd like to know from you.
Where do you come from and where are you bound?
I'd like to ask another favour too:
pray, tell me something of your lineage.

THE ANGEL *replies:*

Assyria is the kingdom whence we come,
heading for Rhages, city of the Medes.

RAGUEL *replies:*

83. If you are coming from those lands, you must
be able to provide me with some news
of one of my relations taken there
after the conquest of the Israelites.
It's a long time since I had news of him.
My wife and his are sister, and I'd like
to know what has become of him. His name
was Tobit, of the tribe of Levi born.

THE ANGEL *replies:*

84. I've no desire, Raguel, to keep the truth

concealed: now listen to the words I say.
 This Tobit that you're asking me about,
 a just and perfect man, one who fears God,
 is the person who sent us here to you,
 and this young lad before you is his son.

RAGUEL *replies*:
 Praise be to God in all eternity,
 And you are truly welcome, my dear son.

RAGUEL *embraces Tobias and the Angel and then he says*:

85. My dearest sweetest son, you cannot claim
 that you are not the dear son of my brother.
 Now may God dispose of me as he will,
 because at last I've heard some news of him.
 Anna, come, here, I have good cheer for you.
 Look at this boy, so noble and so fair:
 this is the son of Tobit, married to
 your sister, born of them into this world.

ANNA *embraces Tobias and says*:

86. Dear son, my words could not express the joy
 and great delight I feel within my heart.
 Your coming here has liberated me
 from all unhappiness and from all woe.
 Our family bond and friendship is enhanced,
 and the great love we have for one another.
 Let us give praise to our almighty God
 for I have seen my Tobit once again.

RAGUEL *says to his servants*:

87. Because think our visitors are tired,
 come on, be quick and organize a meal.
 Make sure this evening that we want for nought
 and that our table's full of things to eat,
 and above all bring good red wines and white,
 because I feel my troubles are all past.
 And now, my sons, come here and wash your hands,
 that the Lord may keep you in joy and health.

TOBIAS *says to Raguel*:

88. Father, listen to what I have to say
 and do not be afraid or nor yet amazed.
 What I am saying is the will of God,
 who aids and counsels those who trust in him,
 and those who serve him always have his help.
 Sarah, who is your one and only child,
 I beg you, give her to me as my bride
 and I will cherish her above all else.

RAGUEL *replies*:

89. This proposal of yours, my dearest son,
weighs heavy on me and gives me great pain,
and I don't know what answer I can give
My misfortune's not know to you, I see.
And yet my mind is always well disposed,
and so I ask you, grant me just one thing:
that we delay this for a few more days
so you can tell your father back at home.

THE ANGEL *says to Raguel*:

90. O Raguel, hear and understand my words:
the gift and favour that Tobias asks
cannot for any reason be refused,
because it is the will of our great God.
And do not hesitate in anything:
a guardian angel will abide with them,
and your daughter, who for so long has been
subjected to travail, will be restored.

RAGUEL *replies to the Angel*:

91. Blessed be God, so merciful and just,
to whom I have entrusted all my faith,
for he will put my grieving heart to rest,
and will not look on my deficiencies.
O Sarah, when you have Tobias here
to be your husband, which is what I hope,
God's angel will be there to guard and guide you,
in whom my soul will always place its trust.

RAGUEL *calls his daughter and says*:

92. Sarah, beloved daughter, come to me.
Will you accept Tobias as your spouse.

SARAH *replies*:

Father, you know I never spoke a word,
and you've never been disobeyed by me.

RAGUEL *replies*:

All I have left to say is just one thing:
all honour be to God, and reverence.
Come here, Tobias, wise and handsome son,
In the name of the Lord, give her the ring.

*Tobias gives her the ring and they celebrate and dance, and
then they withdraw to sleep, and when they are in the
bedchamber, TOBIAS says to Sarah:*

93. Dear wife, let us kneel down upon the ground
and then to heaven let us turn our thoughts.
and with devout humility we'll pray,

and with our prayers we'll ask almighty God
to keep us from temptation and the snares
of the Adversary of human kind.
If we have charity and faith and hope,
dear wife, be in no doubt, it will suffice.

He continues

94. Almighty God, by whose will humankind
was created in the Empyrean Heaven,
and then it pleased you to form with your hands
our human soul, so beautiful and pure,
may all the heavens bless you, earth and sea,
the birds and fishes, creatures great and small,
may each one bless you and sing forth your praise,
and in return, we pray, defend us, Lord.

*Now the Angel binds the Devil and takes the gall of the fish and
puts it on the coals.*

* * *

*Old TOBIT, realizing that Tobias has been away a long time,
wonders to himself and says:*

95. Alas, what does it mean, my own dear son,
that you have not yet come back to your father?
My sorrow grows each day that you're away
and I repent of ever sending you.
O Lord of heav'n, you know he was the one
good thing that for your goodness I had left.
Eternal God, I beg with all my strength
that you allow my son to return home.

He continues:

96. Could it yet be that Gabaël is dead
and doesn't want to pay his talents back?
Were he alive, he would do me wrong,
for he has always been the best of kin.
Dear God, no other comfort have I left,
I'm old and poor and blind and in dire straits.
O God, we can't defy what you decide.
I beg you, do not take what you bestowed.

ANNA says to Tobit:

97. Alas, Tobit, you know I told you so,
the day my dearest son went on his way.
Alas, my dearest son, my sweetest hope,
what country do you find yourself in now?
Perhaps you've met your death along the way,
or you're in prison or you've fallen ill.
A multitude of perils come to mind:

I don't know why they hinder your return.

98. O you who are our light, our staff, and strength,
our happiness in all adversity,
when we had you, we found riches and wealth;
without you i am plunged in poverty.
O father, in the folly of old age,
you've deprived me of such nobility.
You've taken from me such a joyous son
worth more than all gold treasure in the world.

TOBIT *says to Anna:*

99. Don't weep, dear wife, and put your mind at peace
for soon you'll see him coming back to us.
The Lord never deceived us, nor will yet,
and on his servants never turns his back.
Sometimes he likes to test the ones who serve
him faithfully, and then reward them well.
Put your hope, dear wife, in our Lord God,
that he'll return soon safely and with honour.

* * *

Now RAGUEL calls Zita his slave and says:

100. Zita, come here and look if you can see
what's happened to Tobias, how he fared.
Go to the chamber, see if you can spy,
but make sure that nobody hears you there.

*ZITA goes to the doorway and looks through a crack and returns
joyfully to Raguel and says:*

Master, I bring you tidings of great joy!
He looks as though he's just come down from heav'n.
Like the maybush, they are all fresh and gay,
and like two flowering roses, they're in full bloom.

RAGUEL *replies:*

101. Praised be the Lord, most just and merciful
whose will it was that this daughter of mine
should find peace in her heart, sweet repose,
and he has put an end to her cruel woe!
Let everyone set idleness aside:
prepare a banquet, on a lavish scale.
I want people to dance and play and sing,
and let us all give praise unto the Lord.

He continues:

102. Go quickly and give orders for a feast.
that's grand and brilliant, and let all join in!
Slaughter four of the fattest calves we have

for there was never happiness like this.
 Let everyone praise our great God in heav'n,
 by whose will all our works are magnified
 Our blessings on the God of Israël,
 for he has sent us such good tidings here.

*Tobias and Sarah get up and come into the hall to the banquet,
 and TOBIAS says to the Angel:*

103. Brother, you know that my dear father Tobit
 is counting all the days and never stops,
 and lives beset by fear and jealous doubt,
 and can scarce wait till I return to him.
 Raguël, Anna, and Sarah my wife
 want me to stay here with them for a while.
 Brother, you've done me many kindnesses:
 now I ask you for another boon.

104. Take some of our servants and go on
 to Rhages, to the home of Gabaël,
 the man who owes ten talents to my father.
 Take the letter, I know that he will pay
 because he is a relative of ours.
 You'll tell him whom I've taken as my bride
 and ask him to be present at our wedding
 in order to maintain our family ties.

THE ANGEL says to Tobias:

105. Tobias, your words are pleasing to my ears
 and I shall do exactly what you say.
 You will stay here with Raguël and Sarah
 till my return, O my beloved son.

RAGUEL says:

Take two of my manservants with you.
 Martino, come, and you too, Arrighetto!
 Go with this man and serve him faithfully
 and do his bidding as you would my own.

* * *

THE ANGEL leaves with two servants and finds Gabael and says:

106. Almighty God preserve you, Gabaël!
 I'm sent here as a messenger to you
 by a Hebrew, a relative of yours,
 of the tribe of Levi, Tobit by name,
 to ask you, if you can, to send at once
 ten talents that he lent you long ago.
 Here is the letter that you gave him then
 when you received the money as a loan.

GABAEEL *replies*:

107. I bid you welcome, worthy messenger,
 What you ask of me will be done at once,
 because, in very truth, it is his due,
 and I acknowledge that I've done him wrong.
 I've clearly seen the love and charity
 that my dear brother Tobit bears to me.
 My wrong to him was born of ignorance,
 I took too much advantage of his trust.

THE ANGEL *replies to Gabael*:

108. I've something else to tell you, Gabaël:
 his son sends you an invitation too.
 You see, he's taken Sarah as his wife,
 the daughter of Raguel, an excellent man.
 Although the journey's somewhat difficult,
 he sends to ask you, as a relative,
 because you're of one family and one tribe,
 to honour him by coming to his feast.

GABAEEL *replies*:

109. I'm very pleased to hear the words you say,
 and always blessed be the Lord our God.
 One thing however causes me dismay:
 that I can't honour him as I would wish.
 Yet since he wants me at his wedding feast,
 I shall obey him, as the better man.
 So come now, messenger, let us set out,
 and may the guardian angel go with us.

* * *

When they arrived at the house of Raguel, GABAEEL takes Tobias by the hand and says:

110. My greetings to you, my beloved son.
 May God bestow his blessings on you now,
 dear son, born to a man of perfect soul,
 and may Sarah be blessed as well as you,
 and may your progeny also be blessed,
 just as Abram was promised long ago:
 that his seed would be blessed and multiplied
 beyond the number of the stars in heaven.

Now there is great celebration, and after the wedding feast TOBIAS says to the Angel and to the others as follows:

111. Fathers and brothers, now the time has come
 for me to go back to my father Tobit.
 Further delay would not be justified:
 for I would be the cause of his cruel death.
 He does not know the reason for my stay,

and waits for me with great sadness and pain.
Therefore, Raguel, I ask your leave to go
because it's my intention to depart.

He continues:

112. And Sarah, my dear wife, will get to meet
my father and my mother and my kin
who will be filled with joy and with delight
and find contentment in their lives for her.
Raguel, I know that you'll be very sad
when your dear daughter moves away from you,
because I know you hold her very dear,
however there are times when we must part.

RAGUEL *replies:*

113. My dearest son, I know you must depart
to go back to you father who awaits,
but to relieve his suffering and pain
I'll hastily despatch one of my men
who can notify him of your good news.
See if you like this plan that I set out:
you can stay here with me another month
and you would give me great delight and pleasure.

TOBIAS *replies:*

114. O my dear father, I've always obeyed
the guide that I was given by my father.
I've followed every word that he has said,
and what he says now, that's what I will do.

THE ANGEL *replies:*

My advice now is that you must depart
this very day, and in the name of God.
Therefore, dear brother, let's be on our way,
and let's return to your dear father, Tobit.

RAGUEL *replies:*

115. Dear son, the jewels, the silver, and the gold
I give you now are dowry for your bride,
and all the rest of all the wealth I have,
I want it to be yours after my death.
Go to your father now, without delay,
and offer Tobit greetings from me too.
My daughter Sarah I send with you now
entrusting her completely to your care.

He continues to Sarah:

116. To you, Sarah my daughter, I now say:
be ever uncomplaining, meek and kind,
and to the parents of Tobias be

always obedient in everything.
 Be loving in your running of the house,
 and govern household servants carefully.
 And don't decide on anything unless
 you talk it over with your husband first..

He continues to Anna:

117. Come, wife, and get the servants to bring out
 the silver, gold and jewels, the clothes and cloth,
 we're giving to Tobias, as you know.
 Don't let yourself be tricked by avarice,
 we need to keep but little for ourselves.
 You know we only have a few years left:
 but for the fact that we have grown old,
 I'd give them everything we have right now.

He continues:

118. Summon our herders to come from our farms,
 bringing a hundred cows with calves at foot;
 and also, besides these, a thousand ewe,
 each one of them together with her lambs;
 and four handmaidens and six of our slaves,
 twelve dromedaries and six camels too,
 and all these things I willingly bestow
 on my dear daughter Sarah, and Tobias.

When ANNA brings these things, she embraces Sarah and says:

119. My dearest daughter and my only hope,
 I ask you to remember: always keep
 yourself just for your one beloved spouse.
 And you, Tobias, likewise unto her.
 At your departure how my heart does ache!
 May God protect and keep you company.
 Be sure to always do what he commands
 because he's loving and compassionate

She continues:

120. My dear beloved daughter, weep no more,
 go with Tobias, your dear husband, now.
 Make every effort to find blessedness
 and to obey him always in all things.
 And you, Tobias, do not walk too fast,
 so that her body does not feel the strain.
 And do me one favour, let us have your news
 by messenger or letter frequently.

THE ANGEL says to Tobias:

121. Brother, there's something that you need to do.
 Let's go ahead to Tobit, you and I,
 and Sarah your beloved and dear bride

will follow at her leisure with her train.
 Tobit can find no comfort in his heart.
 He lives in constant fear for your return,
 and once you've crossed the threshold of your home,
 you'll kneel and offer up your thanks to God.

He continues:

122. And after this, you will take some of the gall reserved, as I commanded, from the fish, and as a son both good, and true to God, you'll go and rub it on your father's eyes, and you'll relieve him of his cruel pain, and he will be rewarded by God's will. His sight will be restored to him at once because he's been obedient to God.

* * *

*ANNA, the mother of Tobias, goes walking on a mountain to see if Tobias is coming home, and when she sees the dog she runs to Tobit with the dog in her arms and says as follows:*¹³

123. Tobit, rejoice and give praise to the Lord because I have good news to bring to you, for from afar I've seen your son and mine with his companion, making his way home.

TOBIT replies:

How often have I told you, dearest wife,
 God doesn't let his faithful servants die.
 Confess your sin and ask forgiveness now
 for what you said, full of such arrogance.

When Tobias and the Angel arrive at Tobit's house, TOBIAS kneels and says to his father:

124. God save you, O my father, sweet and dear,
 be glad and celebrate: I have returned,
 with every thanks to my most faithful friend,
 who's brought me home to you both safe and sound.
 Give thanks to the almighty Lord our God
 who has not left the one who's served him well.
 Tobit, I have good news to bring to you,
 and to you also, O my dearest mother.

*TOBIT, with his sight restored, replies and says as follows:*¹⁴

125. Who could ever give praise unto the Lord
 for all the kindness and the gifts he's given.
 My dear sweet son and comfort of my heart,

¹³ The dog is first mention in Tobit 6:1, when Tobias and the Angel set out.

¹⁴ 125.1-8 = *Josef, figliuol di Jacob*, 155.1-8.

how happy you have made me on this day.
 God in heaven, too merciful and good,
 you have not punished me for all my sins.
 Forgive me, dearest Lord, righteous and true,
 and dispose of your servant as you wish.

*TOBIAS replies to his father:*¹⁵

126. Not even with a thousand tongues could I
 express the joy and happiness I feel.
 Dear father, you have suffered so much pain,
 today the end of all your torment's come.
 The time that you have left to live on earth,
 sweet father, you will live contentedly.
 God will restore you in his clemency,
 for all your righteous patience has been seen.

*Old TOBIT replies:*¹⁶

127. How foolish is the man who puts his hope
 in this sightless and miserable life
 More foolish he who does not fear the Lord,
 and doesn't trust in his eternal mercy.
 Within me I feel two great joys together
 that greatly comfort my bewildered soul:
 one that I can see heaven and my God,
 the other that my dear son has come home.

TOBIAS replies to his father:

128. I could start to tell you all the things
 done for me by this man, more than a brother.
 Among his favours, gifts, and kindnesses,
 he has redeemed the debt from Gabaël:
 by this good grace, we all find happiness.
 He took me to the house of Raguël,
 who gave his daughter Sarah as my bride
 and named me as his universal heir.

He continues:

129. He is, above all others, a good friend,
 and he has freed us from the Devil's wiles.
 By his good grace I am safely returned,
 and through him we are all restored to wealth.
 This has been far too great a gift from heaven:
 we're much obliged to God on his account.
 He saved me at the river from the fish,
 and now, father, he has restored your sight.

¹⁵ 126.1–8 = *Josef, figliuol di Jacob*, 156.1–8.

¹⁶ 127.1–4 close to *Josef, figliuol di Jacob*, 152.1–4, and 5–8 are constructed on the same pattern.

He continues:

130. Dear father, this is Sarah, now my wife,
daughter of Raguël, as I have said,
and it's the will of our eternal God
and my companion, most perfect and wise.

TOBIT *replies:*

I'm glad of it, and very happy too,
my dear sweet son, and blessings on you now!
And you, my daughter, so gentle and wise,
I offer you a thousand welcomes here.

TOBIAS *replies:*

131. Father, what shall we give as our reward
to my companion, brother Azaria,
for he has brought me home both safe and sound
and been such excellent company for me?
All the jewels, the silver and the gold,
to be found, father Tobit, in the world,
could not completely satisfy this debt.
So, my dear father, what are we to give?

OLD TOBIT *turns to the Angel and says:*

132. We recognize, dearly beloved son,
the kindnesses and gifts that you have given
as a companion and a perfect friend.
We could not offer you a full reward,
so hear my thoughts and what I have in mind:
take as your own one half of everything.
Of the treasure Tobias has brought home,
we are resolved that half should be for you.

When they have assembled all the treasure, THE ANGEL says to Tobit:

133. Father and brother, blessèd be the Lord,
who is our righteous and almighty God.
Love him and follow him with holy fear
and spread the news to all men far and wide
that he alone is giver of these gifts
and now he has been merciful to you.
He's made his peace with you and concord too:
he is the wellspring of benevolence.

He continues:

134. When you prayed to the Lord with tear-filled eyes,
I was who then brought those prayers to him.
And all the alms that you distributed
with purest heart, for love of the Lord God,
the sick you cared for and the prisoners,
the dead you buried with such pure delight,

these are the reasons that I came to you,
to give assistance to your son and you.

He continues:

135. Now I can tell you, I'm one of the seven,
the one who stands before his highest throne,
and for the just and perfect things you've done
eternal God was moved to great compassion,
and the Lord God commissioned me to come
and be tutor and guide to your dear son.
I can reveal that Raphael is my name.
Now I leave you and go to God in heav'n.

When the Angel Raphael has disappeared, THE ANGEL comes to bid farewell:

136. You who are tired and worn out by your toil
under the weight of this deceitful world,
don't wait until your time is running out,
but make haste to the fount that pours forth love.
With the armour of faith, take a bold stand,
put your hope and trust in the Lord our God.
Suffer in peace your torments for the Lord
for what he does is all for our own good.

He continues:

137. Flee the world that looks good to the eyes
but is full of deceptions and of snares.
A little sweetness buys great bitterness,
a small delight before such wretchedness.
The soul, unfortunate and blind and sad
will often be deceived and lose its way
and fails to see that death approaches nigh,
so nobody should postpone a good deed.

He continues:

138. Be just like Tobit, if you're seeking heaven:
he was merciful, god-fearing, and just,
and though he had but little to begin,
he was rewarded by the Lord of heaven.
If you too want as guardian and friend
the Angel Raphael, turn your back on sin,
for he is guardian of Florence the fair.
And praising God, I bid you all farewell.

FINIS