# MARRIAGE AND THE RE-USE
# OF GENESIS 1–2 IN THE BOOK OF TOBIT

Francis M. Macatangay
University of St. Thomas School of Theology
frfrancismacatangay@gmail.com
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6568-5528

*Abstract*: The Book of Tobit is a deuterocanonical narrative that recycles antecedent traditions to craft its story and convey its theological convictions. Recently, the re-use of Gen 2:24 in the Book of Tobit in the context of intermarriage has been offered as textual evidence for the claim that Gen 2:24 is descriptive and not normative of marriage. In other words, the Genesis text is an acknowledgement of the human inclination based on God's solution to the aloneness of the first man to pursue relationships that may go against societal and parental restrictions such as intermarriage. In today's world, such societal restrictions can include same-sex partnerships. Creation themes in the Book of Tobit and the book's global view of marriage, which this essay endeavors to explore, seem to suggest otherwise.

*Keywords*: Book of Tobit. Gen 2:18-24. Marriage. Partnership. Endogamy. Attraction. Creation.

## El matrimonio y la reutilización
## de Génesis 1–2 en el Libro de Tobías

*Resumen*: El Libro de Tobías es un relato deuterocanónico que recicla tradiciones anteriores para elaborar su historia y transmitir sus convicciones teológicas. Recientemente, la reutilización de Gn 2,24 en el Libro de Tobías en el contexto de los matrimonios con extranjeros se ha ofrecido como prueba textual de la afirmación de que Gn 2,24 es descriptivo y no normativo del matrimonio. En otras palabras, el texto del Génesis es un reconocimiento de la inclinación humana, basada en la solución de Dios a la soledad del primer hombre, a buscar relaciones que pueden ir en contra de las restricciones sociales y paternas, como el matrimonio con extranjeros. En el mundo actual, estas restricciones sociales pueden incluir las parejas del mismo

sexo. Los temas de la creación en el Libro de Tobías y la visión global del matrimonio en el libro, que este ensayo trata de explorar, parecen sugerir lo contrario.

*Palabras clave*: Libro de Tobías. Gn 2,18-24. Matrimonio. Pareja. Endogamia. Atracción. Creación.

## Introduction

In the article "'Therefore a Man Leaves His Father and His Mother and Clings to His Wife': Marriage and Intermarriage in Genesis 2:24" published in the *Journal of Biblical Literature* in 2017, Megan Warner examines the creation stories of Genesis that some conservative Christian scholars view as a "second front" in the fight over same-sex marriages and homosexuality in the Bible. For these scholars, Gen 2:24 establishes a normative pattern and a prescriptive definition of marriage that bars homosexual unions and same-sex marriages. Genesis 2 should therefore be seen as foundational for any biblical theology of sexuality and in the interpretation of other biblical texts relevant to this issue.

Warner wants to prove that this so-called second front is a dead-end, arguing that Gen 2:24 is a post-exilic text likely from the late Persian period. This late dating allows for the possibility that it contains an allusion to the pressing issue of intermarriage. Like the issue of same-sex marriage today, mixed marriages or marriages outside of Israelite kinship were considered improper or inappropriate relationships in Persian times. Gen 2:24 "observes the phenomenon of Israelite men being drawn by that same attraction into marriage with non-Israelite women, despite the opposition to such marriages that was prevalent in the Persian period"[1]. And so, Gen 2:24 is not a "normative etiology" of marriage that prohibits relationships deemed inappropriate by parents and society but a descriptive explanation of the powerful attraction that moves men and women to form relationships with one another. Today, this issue might be same-sex marriages but the implication remains the same: this powerful draw to relationship or partnership is to be found in God's creative action that addresses the problem of human aloneness.

To illustrate her claim, Warner cites the possible re-use of Gen 2:24 in Ruth 2:11, 1 Esd 3-5, Mal 2:10-16, and Tob 6:18; these are texts that employ the verbs of Gen 2:24, namely *'zb* "to leave" and *dbq* "to cling".

---

[1] WARNER, "Therefore a Man Leaves his Father", 287.

These texts remarkably show and share an interest in the issue of intermarriage. Since these texts re-use Gen 2:24 in the context of intermarriage, they are claimed to provide support to the assertion that Gen 2:24 is more than likely an acknowledgment of the human propensity to pursue relationships that are deemed societally inappropriate or improper such as intermarriage, or marriage between an Israelite man and a non-Israelite woman.

One can certainly discuss the many merits of Warner's arguments but for the purposes of this essay, I will only consider how the Book of Tobit re-uses Gen 2:24 in Tob 6:18[2]. Tobit clearly alludes to Gen 2:18-24 in the prayer that Tobias voices out to God on the evening of his marriage to Sarah in Tob 8:5-8. The question, of course, is whether the Book of Tobit reads Gen 2:18-24 as prescriptive or descriptive. This essay then is a response to Warner's reading of how the Book of Tobit re-uses Genesis.

Before examining the allusion to Gen 2:24 in Tob 6:18, I would like to look at certain global themes or motifs from the creation stories of Genesis. I would argue that the creation stories of Genesis, admittedly from different sources, are canonically set in such a way that they offer a *paradigm of order* in which limits are respected. And these divinely imposed limits are seen as necessary for the flourishing of life. The Book of Tobit reflects the paradigm found in the creation stories of Genesis. I will also explore how the Book of Tobit views marriage in its narrative context in order to shed some light on its use of Gen 2:18-24. In doing so, the goal is to examine whether the story views Gen 2:18-24 as a normative matrimonial model that applies to the endogamous marriage of Tobias and Sarah or as a description of the strong draw to relationship between these two characters. Finally, I will try to show that the identified allusion to Gen 2:24 in Tob 6:18 in light of the story may actually have a function and sense different from Warner's reading.

---

[2] The word "re-use" is employed in a general sense. In the case of Gen 2:24 and Tob 6:18, "re-use" is an intertextual term that means allusion, which recalls or activates the Genesis text in Tobit with the use of the verb "to cling". In the case of Gen 2:18-24 in Tob 8:5-18, "re-use" means the almost verbatim, direct or explicit citation of Genesis 2. "Re-use" may also refer to the recycling of global themes present in the creation stories of Genesis 1–2. On intertextuality, see CORLEY – MILLER, "Encountering Intertextuality", 1-30, and MILLER, "Methodological Reflections", 319-343.

## 1. Creation Stories in Genesis 1–2

In the first creation account in the first chapter of Genesis, which scholarship has usually ascribed to the Priestly source, God sets up boundaries and limits as a way to impose order upon a swirling chaos. The divine action of placing limits is an act of differentiation, separation, and distinction. For example, God places a disc or dome to contain the waters from above and the waters from below (Gen 1:6-8). The waters from below are further separated, limiting them to a particular place in order to make dry land for plants and fruit trees. The lights in the dome of the sky are made in order to separate the day from the night, light from darkness. God's creative word activates the process of ordering that sets all the elements in place, assigning them their own respective functions (cf. also Ps 104:9-18; Isa 45:12; Job 38; Prov 8:22-29; Sir 33:7-13). In other words, the harmonious relationship and mutual co-existence in creation is a result of differentiation, separation, limitation, and the proper allocation of each element of the created order[3]. When boundaries and limits are disrespected, harmony is disturbed.

After the elements of creation have been assigned a proper place or given limits, God gives a blessing to "every living creature that moves" (Gen 1:21), saying "be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas and let birds multiply on the earth" (Gen 1:22). Genesis 1 also reports that God gives a similar blessing after making humankind male and female and delegating them as the divine representative to all of creation, saying to them, "be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it" (Gen 1:27-28). The Priestly vision then reflects a creative pattern in which God separates and differentiates so that life may thrive. In the same way that God places limits on his creation in its first stage, allowing living creatures to grow, so God has also set up limits for humankind for human life to flourish and continue. In short, the same pattern of limits is repeated in the case of human creation.

God separates humankind as male and female. This creative act that distinguishes male and female as a type of limit necessary for life is consistent with God's boundary-setting activity of Genesis 1. Humans are indeed made in God's image and likeness[4]. And yet, humankind is nonetheless

---

[3] See Och, "Creation and Redemption", 227-228.

[4] For a brief survey of interpretive possibilities for the claim that humankind was created in the image and likeness of God, see Reiss, "Adam: Created in the Image and Likeness of God", 181-186; see also Löning – Zenger, *To Begin With*, 107-113.

differentiated. Humankind may be the closest and the more immediately linked to God than any other living creature, but they are not God[5]. Lest they be mistaken for God, they are created with limits as male and female, and these limits function as an ordering and life-giving principle.

The imposition of limits then opens up to God's creative word of blessing of life, "to be fertile and multiply". Limiting humankind to male and female has in view primarily the creative process that makes human life fruitful. In other words, it is only after placing the limits on humankind that God hands on the continuing process of creation to humans, his final creation. Consequently, humanity in its limitedness as male and female represents or images the living God in their participation in the ongoing process of creation and proliferation of life[6].

## 2. God's Creation of Humanity in Genesis 2

Genesis 2 gives a different and certainly a more earthy account of the creation of humanity. God forms the first man by breathing into a hunk of clay formed from the dust of the earth (Gen 2:7). God places him in the garden of Eden that teems with life to work and guard it (Gen 2:15). And yet, even with the divine breath that closely connects him to God, God identifies a problem. After judging everything in creation as good, God amazingly finds an element in his creation that is not good, namely, the aloneness of Adam: "it is not good for man to be alone" (Gen 2:18). To address the problem, God does something similar to the way he created the first man, forming out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the air. God parades them before Adam so that he can identify and name them (Gen 2:19-20). To name the animals is to know their nature[7]. Since the first man found none of the animals to be a suitable partner and helper, God performs a second and different procedure, this time surgical, by taking a rib or a side from Adam and building it into a woman. It was only after the creation of the woman that Adam found a proper counterpart, a suitable partner, and a companion that corresponds to him.

---

[5] See the comments of Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality,* 20-21.

[6] See the comments of Smith, *The Priestly Vision of Genesis 1*, 101, 135.

[7] von Rad, *Genesis*, 82, claims that animals are "assistants and encouragement" for humans in many ways "but not yet worthy assistants in the ultimate sense which God seeks".

It is often pointed out that the fundamental problem that the creation of humanity addresses in Genesis 2 is the solitariness or the aloneness of Adam. Here, to be alone is not to be in some emotional state that stirs loneliness or even solitude. To be alone is rather to be inherently helpless; it is to lack a helper and partner. In short, it is to be limited. God addresses the first man's limitedness not with a word of blessing as in Genesis 1 but with the creation of Eve, the first woman.

The first man Adam certainly does not name the first woman the way he did with the animals. In his remark upon finding the first woman by his side after a deep sleep, Adam emphasizes rather what is common to them and ignores their differences. The woman certainly corresponds to the man, but she is not like him in many respects. Her origin is different as she was not made from dirt that God molded into clay and breathed into life. She is instead constructed or derived from the side of the first man. And like him, she has no knowledge of her origin either. She, too, is inherently limited.

It is God's action of bringing them together that ultimately overcomes the limits that inhere in being a man or a woman. It is a point of interest that the woman after her creation does not go to the man out of her own initiative; they do not bring each to the other because of some powerful attraction that draws them to each other; rather, God brings the woman to the man, putting them both into a relationship of mutual partnership and companionship that allows them to overlook or overcome their limits and differences. It is God's action that draws and joins them together. In other words, God orders the relationship between the first man and the first woman by bringing them to each other. In this case, the marital union between a man and a woman can be viewed as the divine creational intention that orders relationships. Marriage then is a principle of order that God established at creation. Certainly, God would have looked at this development and pronounced it good after earlier saying that it was not good for man to be alone without a helper and partner.

It is only after the divine act that brings the first man and first woman together that the story tells us that the man leaves father and mother and clings to his wife. This verse may well be a post-exilic gloss but the story, as Genesis 2 tells it, seems to suggest that the divine action of bringing a man and a woman together in partnership is primordially prior to any strong force that draws a man to cling to a woman in a relationship of partnership. If God has not brought and placed them side by side, no "clinging" or "cleaving" between them would have taken place.

## 3. The Motifs and Themes of Genesis 1–2 in the Book of Tobit

In many ways, the Book of Tobit is concerned with the restoration of order. The world that Tobit and Sarah inhabit has turned so unbearably topsy-turvy and chaotic that they both asked God in prayer to release them from this world to their everlasting home (Tob 3:1-6, 10-15). Tobit's misfortunes include loss of sight and loss of property while the unlucky in love Sarah's misfortunes include the loss of seven husbands, which also means the loss of children and a future (cf. Tob 3:8)[8]. Their personal losses, of course, participate in a greater loss, the loss of their homeland. Their story is not only personal, but also national[9].

The journey of its young hero Tobias, which occupies the central part of the story from the 6th to the 11th chapter, can be considered a narrative description of how order is re-established. The stated goal of Tobias' journey is, of course, to retrieve a substantial sum of money deposited with a cousin in a distant land to secure the family in the event of Tobit's death (Tob 4:1-2, 20; 5:1-3)[10]. As the journey unfolds, however, the stated purpose becomes less important as Tobias' marriage to his young kinswoman Sarah and the return of sight to his father Tobit become its primary goals[11]. The conclusion of the young man's journey thus resolves the intertwined misfortunes and sufferings of Tobit and Sarah, satisfying the previously announced divine intention that the angel Raphael was sent from the throne of God to remove the white films from Tobit's eyes and to unbind the demon Asmodeus from Sarah and give her instead as a wife to Tobias (Tob 3:16-17).

Since the journey of Tobias has as its end the restoration of order that allows for life to flourish by repairing the transgressed boundaries and limits that consequently made Tobit's universe chaotic, it is not utterly surprising to find creation motifs and themes echoed in the description of Tobias's jour-

---

[8] See MACATANGAY, *When I Die*, 16.

[9] On the individual and national link, see ANDERSON, "Tobit as Righteous Sufferer", 503; MACATANGAY, *When I Die*, 79-81.

[10] The journey of young Tobias has also been viewed as his rite of passage into adulthood; see, for instance, BARRÍA IROUMÉ, "El matrimonio de Tobías y la sexualidad", 675-697.

[11] It is often pointed out that the journey of Tobias which ends in marriage has echoes of Genesis 24 and 29; see for instance, PRIERO, *Tobia*, 32-33; DESELAERS, *Das Buch Tobit*, 292-303; SCHÜNGEL-STRAUMANN, *Tobit*, 129-131; VAN DEN EYNDE, "One and One Journey", 277-279; NOWELL, "An Ancestral Story", 9-11; MILLER, *Marriage*, 145-147; WÉNIN, "Le marriage", 168-181.

ney[12]. That the journey concludes in a marriage that brings about the resolution and the restoration of order in the lives of the characters follows the pattern and the establishment of order reflected in the creation stories of Genesis 1–2. Their marriage, it has been said, is part of a creation theology[13].

There are a number of elements in the details of Tobias' journey that contribute to this discernment: first, the encounter with the giant fish; second, the exorcism of Asmodeus, and third, the couple's prayer on their wedding night, which specifically alludes to the creation of man and woman in Genesis.

## 3.1. The Giant Fish

The journey begins with Tobias confronting a huge fish, *ichthùs mégás*, unexpectedly leaping out of its natural and assigned environment in order to devour him whole, on the riverbank (6:2)[14]. Posing harm to Tobias, the fish recalls the traditional symbolism of sea monsters or water creatures that are often linked to death and known to swallow all living things[15]. The sudden appearance of the monstrous fish is likely less a folktale motif and more of an echo of the combat myth whereby God defeats the dragon and the sea (cf. Isa 27:1; 51:9-11; Ps 74:12-17; Rev 20:1-3)[16]. Crushing the chaos monsters, God reinstates order in creation by constraining them, keeping them at bay.

This may not be too surprising since animals have been misbehaving lately; the cause of Tobit's blindness are the droppings of sparrows (Tob 2:10). The appearance of the goat causes marital mistrust (Tob 2:11-14). In

---

[12] The journey of Tobias also resonates with Exodus (see Macatangay, "Election by Allusion", 450-463). Since Exodus can also be understood as a type of creation, it is not surprising to find echoes of these creation accounts in Gen 1–3 in the journey narrative of the book of Tobit.

[13] See Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 464; Otzen, *Tobit and Judith*, 40; Nowell, "An Ancestral Story", 12; Egger-Wenzel, "Emotional Relationship", 47; Mazzinghi, "La coppia nel libro di Tobia", 73.

[14] In G[I], the fish jumps out of the water to devour the boy. In G[II], the fish jumps out to devour the *feet* of the boy.

[15] See, for instance, Jacobs, *Delicious Prose*, 117-120, noting that the giant fish symbolically evokes "the interrelated themes of liminality, sex, death, and power" and that the struggle of Tobias with the fish is "a form of resistance against death and dismemberment but also anticipates his later encounter with the demon" (here p. 135).

[16] See Macatangay, "God's Conflict with the Chaos Monster", 321-329. See also Portier-Young, "Eyes to the Blind", 23; Nowell, *Narrative Technique and Theology*, 219; Xeravits, "Stranger in a Strange Land", 87-89;

the case of the fish, Amy-Jill Levine notes that it crosses into improper realms and thereby contravenes the normal relationship between humans and animals in which the fish is "a consumer rather than the consumed"[17]. Certainly, the fish vaulting out of its usual bounds is a breach of boundaries that God established in creation. In this case, God's command to humankind to "have dominion over the fish of the sea" (Gen 1:29) is subverted. Humans are supposed to subdue animals, not the other way around. If not for the guidance of Raphael, God's divine representative, Tobias would not have known how to manage this surprising encounter with the fish. By following the angel's instructions, however, Tobias conquers the fish. The water creature, now returned to its suitable function, becomes "the means of creation"[18] as its parts are used to enhance human life: to exorcise Asmodeus from Sarah and to clean up Tobit's scales-covered eyes. These narrative episodes with animals all suggest that they exercise power over humans in a dysfunctional way, and not as God has intended.

## 3.2. The Demon Asmodeus

The encounter with the fish prepares Tobias for a riskier confrontation with the demon Asmodeus. Out of jealousy, the demon has killed all the seven husbands of Sarah on their wedding night as they approached her to consummate the union (Tob 3:8; 6:14-15). Asmodeus "violates marriage boundaries by killing Sarah's husbands, and the union of a demon with a woman offers no fully human offspring, only anomalies"[19]. The demon thus exemplifies transgression of the essential boundaries between two realms. More specifically, Asmodeus and his irrational longing for Sarah naturally recalls the desire of the fallen angels, or the Nephilim, for the daughters of mortals as told in Gen 6:1-4[20]. Such mixing of categories flouts the limits God has originally established.

---

[17] Levine, "Diaspora as Metaphor", 113; see also Cousland, "A Comedy in Error", 550; Macatangay, "Divine Providence and the Dog", 128-143.

[18] Nowell, *Narrative Technique and Theology*, 219. See also Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 203-205, noting that Tobias' struggle with the fish is in keeping with the typical motif found in romantic quests in which the hero battles a dragon or sea monster (Tobias versus the big fish) which becomes a source of healing after its defeat. See also Brum Teixeira, *Poetics*, 251.

[19] Owens, "Asmodeus", 287.

[20] On the seduction of mortal women by fallen angels, see the *Testament of Naphtali* 3.4-5; *Testament of Reuben* 5.4-7; *Jubilees* 4:15, 22; 5:1-11; *1 Enoch* 6:1-6; 7:1-6; 9:6-9.

In an important respect, Asmodeus also represents the total Other[21] and so, the demon does not correspond to Sarah as a suitable partner and helper as God has envisioned. It is a dysfunction and a deviation from the order of nature. In this way, Asmodeus points to "a return to primordial chaos"[22]. The situation clearly calls for a remedy. Remembering the instruction of Raphael, Tobias takes the liver and heart of the fish out of his bag and places them on live coals, giving off a repulsive odor that sends the demon out of the bridal chamber into the remotest parts of Egypt, where the angel Raphael has him bound (Tob 8:3). This means that Asmodeus is kept within proper limits. The marriage between Tobias and Sarah is made possible now that the transgressed boundaries have been healed.

The young man's journey can be described then as a passage from chaos to the restoration of the violated limits and trespassed boundaries. In short, the journey is a re-ordering in which God reconstitutes the chaotic world according to his original design[23]. And the reinstatement of these boundaries and limits paves the way for the realization of another creational intention, namely, the marriage of Tobias and Sarah.

Since Genesis presents marriage as part of creation, the principle of order for relationships and God's final act in an ordered universe before the so-called Fall, it is hardly surprising that the marriage of Tobias and Sarah would be the final healing that takes place to address the misfortunes of the despairing characters. In fact, the wedding prayer of Tobias and Sarah alludes to the creation of man and woman in Gen 2:18-24 before sin and disobedience tarnished creation. In this way, their marriage can be viewed as the culmination of the restoration of limits and order in Tobit's upside-down world.

## 3.3. Marriage and the Prayer of Tobias and Sarah

The wedding prayer of Tobias and Sarah reflects the story's view of marriage. As Carey Moore observes, the wedding prayer is a "vehicle whereby the narrator explicitly states his understanding of the nature and purpose of holy matrimony"[24]. Still, there are other elements in the narrative that

---

[21] On this point, see Ego, "Denn er liebt sie", 309-317, claiming that Asmodeus represents the "ganz andere" or the "total Other".

[22] Owens, "Asmodeus", 281.

[23] See Fröhlich, "Creation", 35-50.

[24] Moore, *Tobit*, 241.

further contribute to the understanding of marriage. This section will analyze the prayer, followed by a consideration of the story's global view of marriage.

After Asmodeus is banished from the bridal chamber, Tobias initiates and invites Sarah to bless God and pray that the Creator may have mercy on them. At the end of the prayer, Sarah responds with "Amen".

5 "Blessed are you, O God of our ancestors,
and blessed be your name for all the ages forever.
Let the heavens and all of your creation bless you for all the ages.
6 You made Adam, and you made for him a helper, a support – his wife Heua.
And from the two of them the human race has come.
And you said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone;
let us make for him a helper like himself.'
7 And now not because of lust am I taking this kinswoman of mine,
but with sincerity.
Grant that I and she and may find mercy
and that we may grow old together, Amen, Amen". (Tob Gᴵᴵ 8:5b-7)[25] (NETS)

The prayer of Tobias and Sarah on their wedding night contains allusions to both creation accounts in Genesis 1-2[26]. Tobias clearly invokes God as creator in asking the heavens and "all of your creation" (*pâsa hē ktísis sou*) to bless God. Tobias then says, "you made Adam". The use of the Greek verb *poiéō* (to do, to make) in this verse in Tob 8:6 recalls the first creation account in Gen 1:27 because the LXX version restricts this verb for the Hebrew *bārā'* or *'āśāh* in describing the divine action and the creation of humanity in Genesis 1[27]. The second creation account in Gen

---

25 The wedding prayer is found in all three manuscript traditions of the Book of Tobit (Gᴵ, Gᴵᴵ, Gᴵᴵᴵ). For the text, see Weeks, Gathercole, and Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Tobit*, 222-229; Wagner, *Polyglotte Tobit-Synopse*, 92-94.

26 Griffin, *Theology and Function of Prayers*, 172-173, notes that it is not a prayer by or for Tobias alone but the prayer of the married couple. See also Lichtert, "Analyse rhétorique", 187-189.

27 See Griffin, *Theology and Function of Prayer*, 177 n.22. In Gᴵᴵ (Sinaiticus), the verb *poieîn* of Gen 1 is also utilized for Eve, reading literally: "And you made Eve his wife as a helper and support to him" (Tob 8:6). The other Greek versions and the Vetus Latina (VL) use the verb "to give". The Vulgate adds "de limo terrae" to make the reference to the creation of Adam more conformed to Gen 2:7, but this is not in the Greek versions (see Skemp, *Vulgate of Tobit*, 270-271). Although the statement "let us make him a helper like him" echoes Gen 2:18 where God decides to make a "fitting helper for him", the use of the Greek *poiḗsōmen* nevertheless echoes Gen 1:26, where God says, "let us make…" It is also followed by the Vulgate. But see Miller, *Marriage in the Book of Tobit*, 141 n. 461, preferring the reading of Gᴵ and the VL, "to give".

2:7 states that God formed (*éplasen*) the first human from the dust, a verbal description that is absent in the prayer.

Moreover, the claim in the prayer that "from the two of them has come the whole human race" resonates with the divine blessing of fruitfulness given in Genesis 1. The *Vetus Latina* or the Old Latin renders the verse as "and from them you multiplied human offspring". The Old Latin also adds, "give us children as a blessing" to the petition to grant them to "grow old together". This theme of procreation and proliferation of life, which is not an explicit concern of Genesis 2, is alluded to in the accusation of Sarah's servants that prompted her to pray (Tob 3:8). It is also found in Raphael's response to Tobias who first felt fear upon learning that he will marry Sarah. Raphael assures Tobias that Sarah has been destined for him from the beginning and that Tobias will have children by her (Tob 6:18; 4Q197 4 ii 18)[28]. The blessings that Sarah's parents Raguel and Edna make before the couple returns home to Tobit also include petitions to see children (Tob 10:11)[29]. The conclusion of the story reports that Tobias and Sarah indeed have seven sons (Tob 14:3; 4Q196 18:15-16), which proves the fulfillment of God's command at the creation of humankind as male and female[30].

It is specifically clear, however, that the prayer uses Gen 2:18-24. As Geoffrey Miller notes in his monograph *Marriage in the Book of Tobit*, "[t]he parallels with Gen 2:18-24 are unmistakable"[31]. And yet, even before the prayer's evident allusion to Gen 2:18-24, the name of Sarah's mother, Edna, already evokes the garden of Eden (Gen 2:8; cf. Gen 18:12). Just as the garden of Eden is the setting of Adam and Eve's marriage, so Edna sets up the room for the wedding of Tobias and Sarah (Tob 7:15–17; 4Q197).

The first point to make regarding the use of Gen 2:18-24 is that Tobias identifies his marital partnership with Sarah as corresponding to that of Adam and Eve. In this prayer, Tobias notes the role of Eve as helper

---

[28] The Qumran fragment reads: "I am sure that there will be [children from her] for you, [and] they [w]ill be…" See FITZMYER, *Tobit*, 218.

[29] This is in the long text-type (G[II]), in G[III], and in the Old Latin (VL); the mention of children from the marriage of Tobias and Sarah is lacking in G[I].

[30] See FITZMYER, *Tobit*, 324-325. MILLER, *Marriage in the Book of Tobit*, 151, notes that the number seven connotes perfection and says that "Tobiah and Sarah have been perfectly fruitful".

[31] For instance, see MILLER, *Marriage in the Book of Tobit*, 141; See also FITZMYER, *Tobit*, 241, 245; NICKLAS, "Marriage in the Book of Tobit", 149; TOSATO, "On Genesis 2:24", 408 n. 53. See also COLLINS, "Judaism in the Book of Tobit", 33; LOADER, *The Pseudepigrapha on Sexuality*, 172, 174.

(*boēthós*) and support (*stḗrigma*)[32]. Tobias also cites the divine judgment in Gen 2:18 that "it is not good for the man to be alone" as reason for the creation of Eve. As in Genesis 2, the prayer of Tobias suggests that to be alone means to have no helper or to lack support. The allusion to Gen 2:18-24 implies that Tobias sees the role of his wife Sarah to be the same as that of Eve. God brought and gave Sarah to Tobias (cf. Tob 3:17), like Eve to Adam; Sarah is the helper and partner God has intended for Tobias. As Eve is God's gift to Adam as helper and partner, so too is Sarah God's gift to Tobias as support and helper. But unlike Eve who seemed to have failed in her function as support and helper to Adam due to her disobedience, Sarah will literally provide help and support to Tobias with the estate she brings into their marriage.

They have been brought together by God into a relationship just as Adam and Eve were brought together by God for partnership and assistance. And so, their marriage can be described as realizing and sharing in what God has designed from the beginning[33]. It is rooted in and accords with the divine project from the start. What God has done for Tobias and Sarah in marriage parallels God's activity for the sake of Adam and Eve before sin entered the scene[34]. As Adam and Eve were made for each other at creation, so Sarah has been destined for Tobias from long ago (*apó toû aiônos*) (Tob 6:18).

The concluding petition of the prayer for God to have mercy on them and to allow them to grow old together is consistent with emphasizing and commending the value of partnership and support in the relationship between husband and wife. Growing old together fosters deeper unity in a

---

[32] The lexeme *stḗrygma* is not found in G[III] and it is not used in LXX Gen 2:18. For an analysis of these terms, see GRIFFIN, *Theology and Function of Prayer*, 178-179; ZARAGOZA, "La Oracion de Tb 8,5-9", 150-154. ZAPELLA, *Tobit*, 96, describes the presence of this lexeme as "un'aggiunta rafforzativa" or an added term that reinforces *boēthós*. VÍLCHEZ, *Tobit*, 152, offers a similar observation.

[33] The argument is along the lines of Luis Alonso Schökel's observation: "Cada matrimonio repite el misterio de la primera pareja, creada por Dios para la mutua ayuda y la fecundidad. En ese sentido, Sara había sido creada para Tobías, que aún estaba solo, como Adán" (ALONSO SCHÖKEL, *Rut. Tobias. Judit. Ester*, 76-77). But see also the comment of MILLER, *Marriage in the Book of Tobit*, 139: "This divine intervention does not reveal that all marriages are 'made in heaven' but constitutes a manifestation of God's providential care for his people, enabling two afflicted Diaspora families to survive and prosper in the exile and to insure the survival of Judaism in a hostile environment".

[34] See the remarks of GRIFFIN, *Theology and Function of Prayer*, 178: "There is a notable parallel between God's activity on behalf of Adam and Eve, and what he does for Tobiah and Sarah".

couple. It is in the ripeness of age, after all, that one has greater need of a companion and helper[35].

This marriage is according to truth or sincerity (*ep' alētheías*) and not according to lust or immorality (*porneía*)[36]. Tobit's first combined use of the words *alḗtheia* and *porneía* is in his discourse to Tobias before sending him on a journey. Here, Tobit teaches his son how to remember God by practicing the divine commandments (Tob 4:6). It includes avoiding *porneía* or immorality, which he defines as intermarriage or marriage outside of kinship (Tob 4:12). In this light, the prayer of Tobias and Sarah sees their marriage as in accordance with God's will and creational intention as it is set out in Genesis. And so, it is also in keeping with the Mosaic law (cf. Tob 6:13; 7:11,13)[37].

The use of Gen 2:18-24 gives the impression that the marriage of Tobias and Sarah harmonizes with God's design for male-female partnerships from the time of creation[38]. Their marriage is a realization of God's intention expressed in Genesis 2. Like the marriage of Adam and Eve, the marriage of Tobias and Sara reflects the paradigm of order in creation. Here, it is more than likely that for the Book of Tobit, Gen 2:18-24 acts as a normative matrimonial ideal[39].

As for the contextual view of marriage, the story first claims that this marriage between Tobias and Sarah was decreed from heaven from the beginning (Tob 7:11; cf. 3:17). How are we to make sense of this rather bold claim? Perhaps, the prayer's reference to the creation of Adam and Eve is a way to make sense of this arresting claim; God has destined the marriage

---

[35] See Zappella, *Tobit*, 97.

[36] See Mazzinghi, "Un aspetto del matrimonio", 87-96; Lavoie, "L'interdit des mariages mixtes", 80-89. Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit*, 94-95, gives examples from rabbinic literature and notes that this is "a declaration of the levir's honorable intention" (here, 94).

[37] On endogamy as fulfilling the Mosaic law, see Macatangay, "The Wisdom Discourse", 101-103. Dimant, "Tobit and the 'Torah for Exile'", 24, notes that Raphael's endorsement of endogamy "implies the divine approbation of the practice".

[38] Schellenberg, "Suspense", 326 n.60, says "that the account of Eve's creation in Genesis 2 evokes precisely the notion of correspondence that informs Tobit's narrative structure. God makes for Adam 'a helper as his partner,' the NRSV translates the construction", or the more literal translation "corresponding to him".

[39] Tosato, "On Genesis 2:24", 389-409, claiming that the reference to Gen 2:18-24 in Tob 8:6-8 implies that it acts as "a normative matrimonial model". Dimant, "Tobit and the 'Torah for Exile'", 25, observes that the marriage between Tobias and Sarah is "in fulfil[l]ment of the divine creative act of Gen 2:23-24". See also Mazzinghi, "La coppia", 73.

of Sarah with Tobias from the beginning because it repeats or follows the matrimonial model given in the story of Adam and Eve. God is at work in this marriage because their marriage follows the pattern of order God has set forth for the relationship between man and woman in Genesis 2. No matter how it is read, this emphasis on the initial divine action that brings Sarah to Tobit in marriage, since this has been decreed from heaven, closely aligns it with the paradigm found in the story of Adam and Eve. In short, both Genesis and Tobit locate marriage in the will and intention of God.

Second, the story treats their marriage as a definitive manifestation of God's mercy. In their prayer, Tobit and Sarah ask the Lord for mercy that they may grow old together. And when Raguel discovers that all is well with the newlyweds and that nothing untoward has happened to them, he blesses God for "it did not turn out as he expected" but unfolded according to God's mercy, that indeed "God has had mercy on two only children" (Tob 8:16-17). It is God's mercy and care that made the marital union possible despite what seemed to be an insurmountable obstacle presented by the demon Asmodeus. Marriage then is typical of God's merciful and providential interventions; here, it is the divine initiative that transforms the events in Sarah's life from sorrow to joy, reversing her upside down world to blind Tobit's benefit as well (cf. Tob 7:17)[40]. Describing marriage in terms of God's mercy shows God's providential care for Tobias and Sarah as God once did for Adam and Eve at creation. In both cases, marriage is an act of divine providence that is transformative. Specifically in Tobit, marriage has become the divine intention that addresses the suffering of the characters (cf. Tob. 3:16).

Third, the Book of Tobit is rather unique in describing marriage as a kind of realized inheritance. In response to the prayers of the tormented characters, God sends the angel Raphael not only to heal Tobit's eyes but also to give Sarah to Tobias because Tobias "had the right to inherit her" (*klēronomê-sai autḗn*) (Tob 3:17). This announced divine plan admittedly treats Sarah as property to be acquired, but the stress here seems to be that no one other than Tobias can seize the right to marry Sarah[41]. The plan unfolds through a journey during which the angel Raphael disguised as a kinsman informs the young man of his prospects of marriage. The angel tells Tobias that he will marry

---

[40] On divine reversals in Tobit, see López Navas, "Mundus Inversus", 383-403.

[41] See Soll, "Family as Scriptural and Social Construct", 171. Soll also notes that kinship marriage is practiced for economic and "aristocratic" reasons, that is, to avoid the dilution of resources and "to preserve the wealth and traditions of prominent families" (p. 174).

Sarah, Raguel's daughter. The angel also informs Tobias that he will speak to Raguel that Sarah must be given to him in marriage because he has the right to "inherit" all that belongs to her: "take her to yourself as a wife; to you belongs the right" (Tob 6:12). But does "inherit" here only mean inheriting Sarah's ancestral estate? Most likely, "to inherit" includes Sarah. For Tobias to inherit what belongs to her, he has first to inherit Sarah in marriage. Tobias then is to receive Sarah as an inheritance, along with everything from her father's estate that belongs to her. Later, Raguel says that Sarah is being given to Tobias as a gift from God himself (Tob 7:11). Indeed, once it is known that the couple has survived their wedding night, Raguel immediately gives Tobias "half" of what he owns as a first payment on Sarah's inheritance while promising to give the other half after he and his wife die (cf. Tob 8:21).

The marriage union of Tobias and Sarah is presented as a unique type of inheritance, which consequently perpetuates the family line of Sarah and opens up her future[42]. With an eschatological horizon, the story links this notion of marriage as an inheritance with the promise of land. This is evident in Tobit's advice to Tobias to follow the marriage practices of the patriarchs, "who took wives from among their kindred, and they were blessed in their children and their descendants will inherit land" (Tob 4:12). This land inheritance, of course, is not yet granted, seeing that Israel is dispersed in exile, but the rather unique understanding of marriage as a realized inheritance while in exile serves as an initial installment or deposit that points to the possibility of a future fulfillment of other inheritances promised by God as father of Israel. And just as Tobit's healing from blindness signals that the eschatological future has begun to take place in Tobit's present, so too does Sarah's marriage to Tobias understood as an inheritance become a first portion of the future inheritances that await God's people, which in this case is the inheritance of land where scattered Israel will be gathered (cf. Tob 13:5; 14:5-7). In fact, Edna's parting words to the couple resonate with the idea that this marriage is a "pledge". Edna tells Tobias in Tob 10:12, "I entrust to you my daughter as a pledge" (*parathḗkē*), which may imply that Tobias' marriage with Sarah has to be guarded and preserved as a pledge so that she will not be "grieved all the days of her life"[43]. Given that Sarah can be viewed as symbolic of Israel[44], Edna's parting words gesture toward the fulfillment of hopes for diasporic Jews.

---

[42] See DALEY, *God's Will and Testament*, 136-139.

[43] This verse is present in both G[I] and G[II].

[44] See MILLER, "Sarah's Unbalanced Relationship", 95-103.

Finally, the story presents marriage as a source of radical hope in an exilic condition that is viewed as protracted and persistent[45]. Throughout the vicissitudes of history, with the losses and misfortunes Israel has suffered, marriage is the one institution that recurs but remains unchanged. The story itself focuses its center on three couples whose marriage stays intact despite certain crises[46]. Even with marital misunderstandings, Tobit is intent on preserving his marriage in life and in death, asking his son to bury them together "in one grave" (Tob 4:4). The threat to this divine intention also comes from outside in the form of the demon Asmodeus, but it turns out that the design God has shaped from the start of creation has prevailed in the lives of his faithful. Marriage is an expression of the divine will and blessing that neither demons nor historical upheavals have forfeited[47]. Marital difficulties may arise, but the example of Tobit and Hannah shows that differences can be discussed and negotiated. That this divine intention from the beginning of time continues to be realized despite historical, personal, and demonic obstacles points to the enduring validity of God's favor and intentions for his people. In the Book of Tobit, at least, the institution of marriage has provided a radical hope for overcoming the ongoing exilic condition[48].

In light of these considerations, the Book of Tobit puts some heavy literary and theological weight on marriage that only a prescriptive or normative reading of Gen 2:18-24 would seem to fit and make better sense of the way the narrative uses this Genesis text.

## 4. "To cling" in Gen 2:24 and Tob 6:18

According to Warner, Tob 6:18 also alludes to a particular word in Gen 2:24. The word that is used in Tob 6:18 is *kolláō* (*ekollḗthē* in this verse) which means "to cling" or "to cleave" and recalls *proskollēthḗsetai* of LXX

---

[45] See MACATANGAY, "The Shape of Time", 300-303.

[46] On these crises, see Petraglio, "Tobit e Anna", 385-402; CALDUCH-BENAGES, "Una historia de familia", 49-60; EGGER-WENZEL, "Emotional Relationship", 52-68 and MAZZINGHI, "La coppia nel libro di Tobia", 57-69.

[47] As NOWELL ("An Ancestral Story", 12-13) has observed, "[t]he creation story is retold in the context solely of blessing. Just as the Priestly tradition in the Pentateuch … surrounds the story of sin and curse with blessing, so blessing renders the curse invisible in this postexilic story of Tobiah and Sarah. The blessing of marriage has been freed from the curse of sin just as Asmodeus has been banished by the smoke, the prayer, and the power of God in his angels".

[48] See MACATANGAY, "The Shape of Time", 305-307.

Gen 2:24: "a man [...] shall cleave to his wife"[49]. But how are we to understand the claim in Tob 6:18 that Tobias' heart (in the case of the long Greek version) or Tobias' spirit/soul (in the case of the short Greek version) clung or cleaved to Sarah intensely upon learning from Raphael that his prospective wife is a kinswoman from his father's house?

The young Tobias certainly sets out for the journey with no plan of marriage until the angel mentions it. Tobias, in fact, objects to the angel's suggestion of marriage for fear of leaving his parents without anybody to bury them (Tob 6:14-15). It is only when Raphael mentions that Sarah is a kinswoman of the same lineage as his father that Tobias "loved her very deeply" and that "his heart clung" to Sarah (Tob 6:18)[50]. In this case, at least, the story seems to confine this powerful draw to an endogamous relationship. More than anything else, lineage and kinship defines this powerful attraction that Tobias feels for Sarah. After all, it is the mention of Sarah's lineage that draws Tobias' heart to Sarah's, touching his innermost being.

And yet, before any of this "clinging" takes place, a decree from heaven has already been made that Tobias is to inherit Sarah in marriage. In fact, the divine response to the prayers of the distressed characters Tobit and Sarah does not say explicitly that the marriage the angel Raphael is to ensure is due to the fact that Tobias and Sarah are kin (cf. Tob 3:16)[51]. Moreover, Sarah's father Raguel later claims that "from heaven it has been decreed that she be given" to Tobias (Tob 7:11). Something other than lineage is now given as a reason for the validity of this marriage. Furthermore, God's judgment in Tobit to bring Sarah and Tobias together in marriage is meant to alleviate the unfortunate situation of the characters, which is unlike Gen 2:18-24, where God brings the first man and woman together to address human aloneness. In other words, the divine intention of marriage for Tobias and Sarah provides a different reason and precedes the "clinging" due to kinship relations.

---

[49] G^I and G^II attest to the use of the verb in this verse. 4Q197 and the VL also have similar readings. See Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 221; see also Brum Teixeira, *Poetics*, 257-259.

[50] On the angel's art of persuasion, see Brum Teixeira, *Poetics*, 236-251.

[51] While Tob 3:16 does describe Sarah as "daughter of Raguel" and Tobias as "son of Tobit", the passage does not make any references to kinship as a motivation for marriage. The only reason provided for the divine decision is that "Tobias had the right to inherit her before all others who desired to have her". Such language may point to levirate marriage, but the account in Tobit does not strictly follow this practice. See, for instance, Soll, "The Family as Scriptural and Social Construct", 171; Macatangay, "Wisdom Discourse", 101-103.

Even if Tobias' action of clinging to Sarah has been presumably brought about by the powerful force of attraction due to kinship, Tobias does not forget or leave his parents, which makes it rather different from the claim of Gen 2:24. Tobias is worried in fact that he would leave his parents if he dies, but not if he marries. Moreover, this clinging happens before the marriage of Tobias and Sarah. Indeed, this clinging takes place before Tobias and Sarah have even spoken or laid eyes on each other, unlike Adam and Eve who were right next to each other when the attraction and the joining happened. That is why, the situation of Tobias is not the same case as in the Genesis story where the actions of leaving of parents and clinging to wife occur only after God has brought the first man and the woman together.

Moreover, the prayer reverses the order in Genesis 2. Genesis first mentions the aloneness of man as the reason for the divine action followed by God's decision to make him a helper (cf. Gen 2:18), which is why God brought the woman to the man (Gen 2:22). The prayer of Tobias, however, first mentions that Eve was made as a helper and support to Adam, followed by a reference to human fruitfulness. It ends by quoting the divine judgment that "it is not good for the man to be alone" (Tob 8:6). The prayer's reversal of the order found in Genesis, the repetition of *boēthós* or helper, and the reinforcing addition of *stḗrigma* not found in Gen 2:18 LXX, all seem to emphasize the divine gift of the woman as partner to the man. Here then, the focus seems to be on the divine action and not on the human attraction.

In this regard, the narrative emphasis on the divine initiative suggests that God's will or intention enjoys priority over any powerful attraction. In Tobit, at least, the powerful draw that Tobias feels toward Sarah after learning about her lineage happens only after God has already decreed the marriage. This implies that the attraction that happens later, which leads to an endogamous marriage, may not necessarily be located in God's creative intentions. With these considerations in mind, a normative matrimonial reading of the use of Gen 2:18-24 in the Book of Tobit might have to be favored.


## 5. Some Further Considerations

The question still remains whether a normative reading of the use of Gen 2:24 in the Book of Tobit leaves the possibility open for a more expansive interpretation for contemporary readers. Gen 2:24 may have been normative for the Book of Tobit because of the circumstances of the time when the book was written, which called for a kind of an ethic *in extremis* or threatened situations. Untethered to the land and living in a diasporic environment

where the risk to Jewish religious identity is always palpable, endogamous marriage is a practical ethic or way of life in the interim that ensures survival of such identity. Intermarriage can realistically lead to ruin and the eventual dissolution and loss of identity (cf. Tob 4:12)[52]. This practice is meant to secure and protect Israel's ethnic and religious identity in the meantime in such an environment. In light of the circumstances of the Hellenistic period, "faithful spouses could help one another in the practice and knowledge of their faith"[53]. The Book of Tobit then views this marital practice as normative due to the circumstances of that particular time; it is regarded as following the Mosaic law[54]. To use the phrase of Devorah Dimant, it is part of the "Torah for exile" in which the practice of religious piety continues to be faithful to the essentials of the Mosaic law, "albeit in a manner fitting with the new conditions experienced by the deported Jews"[55]. With this in mind, it is reasonable to ask: does the book envision that such a practice be normative for all time? When the time of fullness comes (Tob 14:5), when Israel inherits the land and all the scattered tribes are gathered there and when "many nations from far away" and "inhabitants of all the remote parts of the earth" ascend Jerusalem (Tob 13:11)[56], would the book continue to count endogamous marriage as a practice necessary for keeping the Mosaic law?

Second, the prayer of Tobias includes a reference to human fecundity that comes from the divine blessing and command to humans to "be fruitful and multiply" in Gen 1:28. Tobias says, "from the two of them (Adam and Eve) the human race has sprung" (Tob 8:2)[57]. This suggests that human fruitfulness came from the first woman and man as the first parents. The insertion of this reference to procreation, which accomplishes the divine blessing, is quite surprising for at least two reasons. First, the reference to

---

[52] See Lavoie, "L'interdit des mariages mixtes", 75-90; Hieke, "Endogamy", 103-120; Levine, "Diaspora as Metaphor", 105; Quezada del Río, "La situación de la mujer", 173-174, who also argues that the focus on endogamy, among others, indicates that the book may have been written in a small diaspora community outside of Jerusalem.

[53] Griffin, *Theology and Function of Prayer*, 179. See also Moore, *Tobit*, 41; Zaragoza, "La oración", 145.

[54] See Macatangay, *The Wisdom Instructions*, 84-85.

[55] Dimant, "Tobit and 'Torah for Exile'", 29.

[56] On these eschatological expectations, see López Navas, *De la Oscuridad a Jerusalén*, 275-281.

[57] Gen 3:20 calls Eve "the mother of all living". The prayer of Tobias, however, specifically attributes the beginning of the human race to both Adam and Eve: "and from the two of them the human race has come" (Tob 8:6).

human fruitfulness from Genesis 1 is in the middle of the two references to the notion of wife as helper and support to the husband from Genesis 2. This procreative element, which Genesis 2 does not seem to have within its purview, seems to be an unnecessary addition in a prayer that focuses much of its attention on the role of wife as helper and support to the husband. Furthermore, this positive view of the fulfillment of God's procreative command is traced to Adam and Eve, making them the first parents of all humanity (*tò spérma tôn anthrṓpōn*). Although implied, nowhere in Genesis 1–2 does it explicitly say that Adam and Eve are the first parents of humanity or that all of humanity came from these two[58]. The inclusion of this interpretation in the prayer suggests the praiseworthy value of procreation, which is not positively portrayed in Genesis 3 and 4[59]. It also provides a universal twist to the story's notion of marriage. And so, the addition of this particular reading of Genesis seems to be at odds with the story's emphasis on endogamy. The universal thrust seems to chafe against the story's particularistic focus on kinship marriage. This strain may not necessarily undermine the book's emphasis on endogamy, but it does leave the door open, however slightly, to marriages beyond blood and kinship so long as they are fruitful. Would such textual openness then, no matter how minor, provide some kind of warrant for a more expansive interpretative horizon for the readers of today? These considerations are certainly worth further explorations.

## Conclusion

Against the claim that the use of Gen 2:24 in the Book of Tobit is descriptive, this essay attempts to show that its use in the story is, in fact, prescriptive. It first considers the idea in the creation stories of Genesis 1–2 that life-giving order results from respecting the limits God has assigned from the beginning. It then traces the transgression of boundaries and limits and their restoration in the Book of Tobit, with the marriage of Tobias and Sarah as an ordering principle that starts the return to stability. It looks at the understanding of marriage in the wedding prayer of Tobias and Sarah as a positive development that fulfills the intention of God at creation; Tobias and Sarah view their marriage as conforming to the matrimonial mod-

---

[58]  VL: "et ex his multiplicasti semen hominum". Vílchez, *Tobit*, 152, notes that this particular commentary of the author was common at that time.

[59]  I would like to thank Kelley Coblentz-Bautch of St. Edward's University for her insightful comments and observations regarding some of the points raised here.

el of Adam and Eve. The story also views marriage not only as an act of divine mercy and providence but also as an inheritance, decreed from the start and now granted to Tobias and Sarah as a pledge. In light of the eschatological expectations that scattered Israel will inherit the land in the time of fullness, God's gift of marriage to two individuals becomes a vital and radical pointer to a future when God as father will grant Israel other promised inheritances.

Despite the fact that the story employs *kolláō* in Tob 6:18, which recalls the verb *proskollēthḗsetai* of LXX Gen 2:24, the narrative context in Tobit seems to stress the decision and intention of God, and not the forces of attraction, as determinative of the life-saving marital partnership between the two characters Tobias and Sarah. It is only after the divine emissary Raphael has set the revealed divine plan in motion that the story specifies Sarah's lineage as that which causes the heart of Tobias to cling to her.

Still, despite the story's prescriptive reading of Gen 2:18-24, the Book of Tobit seems to leave open, however slightly, some hermeneutical possibilities for today's readers when the circumstances the story addresses and the universal openness it shows are all taken into consideration[60].

## Bibliography

Alonso Schökel, L., *Rut, Tobías, Judit, Ester* (Los libros sagrados 8), Madrid 1973.

Anderson, G., "Tobit as Righteous Suffererr", Eric Mason *et al*. (eds.), *A Teacher for All Generations: Essays in Honor of James C. VanderKam* (JSJSup 153), Leiden 2011, 493-507.

Barría Iroumé, C., "El matrimonio de Tobías y la sexualidad: un estudio psicológico". *Teología y Vida* 46 (2005) 675-697.

Brum Teixeira, J. L., *Poetics and Narrative Function of Tobit 6* (DCLS 41), Berlin – Boston 2019.

Calduch-Benages, N., "El libro de Tobías, una historia de familia", *La Sagrada Familia en el siglo XX. Actas del VI Congreso Internacional sobre la Sagrada Familia*, Barcelona 2003, 49-60.

---

Collins, J., "The Judaism in the Book of Tobit", G. G. Xeravits and J. Zsengeller (eds.), *The Book of Tobit: Text, Tradition, Theology* (JSJSup 98) Leiden 2005, 23-40.

Corley, J. – G. D. Miller, "Encountering Intertextuality in Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature", Jeremy Corley and Geoffrey David Miller (eds.), *Intertextual Explorations in Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature* (DCLS 31), Berlin – Boston 2019, 1-30.

Cousland, J. R. C., "Tobit: A Comedy in Error", *CBQ* 65 (2003) 535-553.

Daley, D., *God's Will and Testament: Inheritance in the Gospel of Matthew and Jewish Tradition*, Waco 2021.

Deselaers, P., *Das Buch Tobit. Studien zu seiner Entstehung, Komposition un Theologie* (OBO 43), Freiburg 1982.

Dimant, D., "Tobit and the 'Torah for Exile' in Light of the Qumran Texts", *ZThK* 119 (2022) 4-30.

Egger-Wenzel, R., "The Emotional Relationship of the Married Couple Hannah and Tobit", A. Passaro (ed.), *Family and Kinship in the Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature* (DCLY Yearbook 2012/2013), Berlin 2013, 41-76.

Ego, B., "'Denn er liebt sie' (Tob 6:15 MS 319). Zur Rolle des Dämons Asmodeus in der Tobit-Erzählung", A. Lange *et al.* (eds.), *Die Dämonen: Die Dämonologie der israelitisch-jüdischen und frühchristlichen Literatur im Kontext ihrer Umwelt = Demons: The Demonology of Israelite-Jewish and Early Christan Literature in Context of their Environment*, Tübingen 2003, 309-317.

van den Eynde, S., "One Journey and One Journey Makes Three: The Impact of the Reader's Knowledge in the Book of Tobit", *ZAW* 117 (2005) 273-280.

Fernández Zaragoza, N., "La oración de Tb 8,5-9 en el contexto del libro y a la luz de Gn 2,18", *EstBib* 74 (2016) 135-157.

Fitzmyer, J. A., *Tobit* (CEJL), Berlin 2003.

Fröhlich, I., "Creation in the Book of Tobit", T. Nicklas – K. Zamfir (eds.), *Theologies of Creation in Early Judaism and Ancient Christianity in Honor of Hans Klein* (DCLS 6), Berlin 2010, 35-50.

Griffin, P., *The Theology and Function of Prayer in the Book of Tobit*, Dis. CUA 1984.

Hieke, T., "Endogamy in the Book of Tobit, Genesis, and Ezra-Nehemiah", G. G. Xeravits – J. Zsengeller (eds.), *The Book of Tobit: Text, Tradition, Theology* (JSJSup 98), Leiden 2005, 103-120.

Jacobs, N. S. S., *Delicious Prose: Reading the Tale of Tobit with Food and Drink. A Commentary* (JSJSup 188), Leiden – Boston 2018.

Lavoie, J.-J., "L'interdit des mariages mixtes comme stratégie identitaire en Tobit 4,12-13", A. Gagné – A. Gignac – G. S. Oegema (eds.), *Constructing Religious Identities during the Second Temple Period: Festschrift for Jean Duhaime on the Occasion of his 68th Birthday* (Biblical Tools and Studies 24), Leuven 2016, 75-90.

Levine, A.-J., "Diaspora as Metaphor: Bodies and Boundaries in the Book of Tobit", J. A. Overman – R. S. MacLennan (eds.), *Diaspora Jews and Judaism: Essays in Honor of, and in Dialogue with A. Thomas Kraable* (SFSH 41), Atlanta 1992, 105-117.

Lichtert, C., "Analyse rhétorique des cinq prières et bénédictions du livre de Tobit", *Révéler les œuvres de Dieu. Lecture narrative du livre de Tobit*, Paris 2014, 182-195.

Loader, W., *The Pseudepigrapha on Sexuality: Attitudes towards Sexuality in Apocalypses, Testaments, Legends, Wisdom, and Related Literature*, Grand Rapids 2011.

Löning, K. – E. Zenger, *To Begin With, God Created...: Biblical Theologies of Creation*, Collegeville 2000.

López Navas, E., "'El Señor de los cielos te dé alegría en lugar de tu tristeza' (Tb 7,17). *Mundus inversus* en el libro de Tobías", *EstBib* 78 (2020) 383-403.

–, *De la oscuridad a Jerusalén. Estudio exegético-teológico de Tob 13* (ABE 66), Estella 2016.

Macatangay, F. M., *The Wisdom Instructions in the Book of Tobit* (DCLS 12), Berlin –New York 2011.

–, "Election by Allusion: Exodus Themes in the Book of Tobit", *CBQ* 76 (2014) 450-463.

–, "The Wisdom Discourse of Tobit as Instruction in Torah", *BN* 167 (2015) 99-111.

–, *When I Die, Bury Me Well: Death, Burial, Almsgiving, and Restoration in the Book of Tobit*, Eugene 2016.

–, "God's Conflict with the Chaos Monster in the Book of Tobit", M. Duggan *et al*. (eds.), *Cosmos and Creation: Second Temple Perspectives* (DCLY 2019), Berlin – Boston 2020, 319-329.

–, "Divine Providence and the Dog in the Book of Tobit", *JTS* 13 (2019) 128-143.

–, "The 'Shape of Time' in the Book of Tobit", S. Beyerle – M. Goff (eds.), *Notions of Time in Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature* (DCLY 2020/2021), Berlin – Boston 2021, 295-309.

Mazzinghi, L., "'Non per passione, ma con verità': un aspetto del matrimonio secondo Tb 8,7", J. E. Aguilar Chiú *et al*. (eds.), *Bible et Terre Sainte: Mélanges Marcel Beaudry*, New York 2008, 83-96.

–, "La coppia nel libro di Tobia: fra tradizione e novità", *RicStoBib* 30 (2018) 1998 55-80.

Miller, G. D., *Marriage in the Book of Tobit* (DCLS 10), Berlin 2011.

–, "'I am My Father's Only Daughter'. Sarah's Unbalanced Relationship with her Parents in the Book of Tobit", A. Passaro (ed.), *Family and Kinship in the Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature* (DCLY Yearbook 2012/2013), Berlin 2013, 87-106.

–, "Methodological Reflections for Future Intertextual Studies", J. Corley – G. D. Miller (eds.), *Intertextual Explorations in Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature* (DCLS 31), Berlin – Boston 2019, 319-343.

Moore, C. A., *Tobit: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 40A), New York 1996.

Nicklas, T., "Marriage in the Book of Tobit: A Synoptic Approach", G. G. Xeravits – J. Zsengeller (eds.), *The Book of Tobit: Text, Tradition, Theology* (JSJSup 98), Leiden 2005, 139-154.

Nowell, I., *The Book of Tobit: Narrative Technique and Theology*, Dis. CUA 1983.

–, "The Book of Tobit: An Ancestral Story", J. Corley – V. Skemp (eds.), *Intertextual Studies in Ben Sira and Tobit. Essays in Honor of Alexander A. Di Lella, O.F.M.* (CBQMS 38), Washington DC 2005, 3-13.

Och, B., "Creation and Redemption: Towards a Theology of Creation", *Judaism* 44 (1995) 226-243.

Otzen, B., *Tobit and Judith*, London 2002.

Owens, J. E., "Asmodeus: A Less than Minor Character in the Book of Tobit", F. Reiterer *et al.* (eds.), *Angels: The Concept of Celestial Beings – Origins, Developments and Reception* (DCLY 2007), Berlin 2007, 277-288.

Petraglio, R., "Tobit e Anna: Un cammino difficile nella crisi di una coppia", *RivBiblIt* 52 (2004) 385-402.

Portier-Young, A., "'Eyes to the Blind': A Dialogue Between Tobit and Job", J. Corley – V. Skemp (eds.), *Intertextual Studies in Ben Sira and Tobit: Essays in Honor of Alexander A. Di Lella, O.F.M.* (CBQMS 38), Washington DC 2005, 14-27.

Priero, G., *Tobia* (La sacra Bibbia), Torino 1953.

Quezada del Río, J., "La situación de la mujer en el libro de Tobías", *Revista Bíblica* 71 (2009) 149-180.

von Rad, G., *Genesis: A Commentary. Revised Edition* (OTL), Philadelphia 1973.

Reiss, M., "Adam: Created in the Image and Likeness of God", *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 39 (2011) 181-186.

Schellenberg, R., "Suspense, Simultaneity, and Divine Providence in the Book of Tobit, *JBL* 130 (2011) 313-327.

Schüngel-Straumann, H., *Tobit* (HTKAT), Freiburg 2000.

Skemp, V. T. M., *The Vulgate of Tobit Compared with Other Ancient Witnesses* (SBL Dissertation Series 180), Atlanta 2000.

Soll, W., "The Family as Scriptural and Social Construct", C. A. Evans and J. A. Sanders (eds.), *The Function of Scripture in Early Jewish and Christian Tradition* (JSNTSS 154), Sheffield 1998, 166-175.

Tosato, A., "On Genesis 2:24", *CBQ* (1990) 389-409.

Trible, P., *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Overtures to Biblical Theology 2), Philadelphia 1978.

Smith, M., *The Priestly Vision of Genesis 1*, Philadelphia 2010.

Vílchez, J., *Tobías y Judit* (Narraciones III), Estella 2000.

Wagner, C. J., *Polyglotte Tobit-Synopse: Griechish – Lateinisch – Syrisch – Hebräisch – Aramäisch. Mit einem Index zu den Tobit-Fragmenten vom Toten Meer* (Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen Philologische-Historische Klasse 258), Göttingen 2003.

Warner, M., "'Therefore a Man Leaves His Father and His Mother and Clings to His Wife': Marriage and Intermarriage in Genesis 2:24", *JBL* 136 (2017) 269-288.

Weeks, S. – S. Gathercole – L. Stuckenbruck, *Tobit: Texts from the Principal Ancient and Medieval Traditions. With Synopsis, Concordances, and Annotated Texts in Aramaic, Hebrew, Greek, Latin and Syriac* (FoSub 3), Berlin 2004.

Wénin, A., "Le mariage de Tobias et ceux d'Isaac et de Jacob en Genèse", *Révéler les œuvres de Dieu. Lecture narrative du livre de Tobit*, Paris 2014, 168-181.

Xeravits, G., "Stranger in a Strange Land: Tobiah's Journey", G. Xeravits – J. Dusek (eds.), *The Stranger in Ancient and Medieval Jewish Tradition* (DCLS 4), Berlin 2010, 86-94.

Zappella, M., *Tobit. Introduzione, traduzione e commento* (Nuova versione della Bibbia dai testi antichi 30), Cinisello Balsamo 2010.

Zimmermann, F., *The Book of Tobit. An English Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (JAL), New York 1958.