

## **Tobit's Blindness**

Tobit 1:1 – 2:10

by Don Falkos

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Tobit and his family were among those exiled to Ninevah when Israel was conquered by Assyria. Tobit was a good man who had grown up worshiping God, unlike his relatives who sacrificed to the golden calf that King Jeroboam had set up in Dan. Tobit gave generously to the poor – to the widow, to the orphan, to anyone in need. Because of his devotion to God, he gained a high position in the Assyrian government. He often traveled to Media, where he entrusted a large amount of money to his cousin Gabael. But when Sennacherib became king of Assyria, Tobit could no longer travel to Media and was cut off from that money.

After Sennacherib scurried back home from Judah having been chastised by the Lord, he was very angry and killed many Israelites. Tobit secretly buried the bodies. When the king found out, he put a price on Tobit's head. Tobit ran away. In his absence, his wife Anna and his son Tobias were arrested, and all his belongings were confiscated. Not long after, Sennacherib was assassinated by two of his sons. It was now safe for Tobit to return to Ninevah, and his wife and son were restored to him.

Tobit sent his son out to find a needy Israelite to join him for his Pentecost dinner. Tobias came back having discovered the body of a murdered Israelite in the street. Tobit buried the man, cleansed himself, and ate his meal in sorrow.

The night was hot, so Tobit slept outside. There were sparrows on the wall above him. Their warm droppings fell into his eyes forming white films. Doctors' treatments just made things worse until he was completely blind.