

# Resurrection and God's Kingship in Tobit 13. The Role of Tob 13:2 in Its Context

IBOLYA BALLA

Pápa Reformed Theological Seminary  
e-mail: karib34@hotmail.com  
ORCID: 0000-0002-0643-725X

**ABSTRACT:** Tob 13:2 is found in the context of the hymn of praise of Tobit in Tobit 13. The chapter contains a Zion song in 13:9-18 addressed to Jerusalem, similar to those found especially in *Ap Zion* (11QPs<sup>a</sup> XXII 1-15) and Bar 4:30-5:9. The latter two do not have the idea of resurrection that appears in Tob 13:2, which in its immediate context (v. 1-8) is closely connected with 13:9-18. The paper aims at providing an overview of Tobit 13 in the context of the book and in relation to *Ap Zion* (11QPs<sup>a</sup> XXII 1-15) and Bar 4:30-5:9, while summing up the most important differences of the three Zion songs and attempting to explain the presence of the idea of resurrection in Tobit 13. The main arguments are as follows: the appearance of the concept of resurrection in relation to that of God's kingship in proximity to a Zion song has to do – among others – with the characteristic content of Tobit's and his family's storyline in Tobit 1-12 and with the concern to combine notions of national and personal fate. The study refers to some of the scriptural influences on Tobit 13 and their significance, and treats the questions of the author's view on God's kingship, authority and on retribution at a national and individual level.

**KEYWORDS:** resurrection, restoration, God's kingship, Second Temple Zion songs

**T**ob 13:2 with its reference to Hades and to some form of resurrection raises the questions of what the author of this verse thought about resurrection, how 13:2 fits into the overall message of the book and how the idea of resurrection is connected with the notions of God's kingship, authority and retribution. The paper examines these questions especially in the light of the characteristics of the Book of Tobit.

## 1. The Language, Date, Author, Provenance and Genre of the Book of Tobit

The discovery of five fragmentary texts (four in Aramaic, 4Q196-4Q199 {4QTob<sup>a-d</sup> Aramaic} and one in Hebrew, 4Q200 {4QTob<sup>e</sup> Hebrew}) in 1952 in

the 4<sup>th</sup> Qumran cave has led to the consensus among most of the scholars that the Book of Tobit – preserved in Greek in the LXX – was composed in a Semitic language. Most scholars accept Aramaic as the original. These fragments are closest to the so-called long Greek recension or G<sup>II</sup>, which – along with the recensions G<sup>I</sup> and G<sup>III</sup> – is thought to be the earliest version. It is probable that the Aramaic original was soon translated into Hebrew, the Vorlage of G<sup>II</sup>.<sup>1</sup>

While the narrative is set in eighth–seventh century B.C. Assyria, before the Deuteronomic reform, it reflects the piety of Second Temple Judaism.<sup>2</sup> Its date of composition ranges from as early as the fourth or late third century B.C. to the early second century B.C. The *terminus ante quem* is supported by the presence of the book's Aramaic and Hebrew fragments among the Dead Sea Scrolls. In addition, the work does not reflect the upheavals of the Maccabean crisis caused by the desecration of the Jerusalem Temple by Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164 B.C.). The *terminus post quem* can be deduced from the fact that the book refers to the prophets as a collection, and to the “book of Moses” (Tob 6:13; 7:11-12) and to the “law of Moses” (Tob 7:13), implying an advanced state of the formation of the Pentateuch, and the authoritative status of the Torah and the prophets.<sup>3</sup>

As for the provenance of the book, almost all the regions of the Ancient Near East – the Babylonian Diaspora, Syria, Samaria, Palestine, Egypt – have been considered. On account of the interest of the writer in Jerusalem and its cult, recent research tends to favour a Judean author, whose focus was on the prophetic eschatological vision of a restored Israel and Jerusalem. His aim was to encourage exilic Jews with the hope of return so that these eschatological expectations might be brought to completion.<sup>4</sup>

- 
- 1 G. Xeravits, *A deuterokanonikus könyvek* (Deuterocanonica 4; Budapest: L'Harmattan 2008) 39-41; R. Henderson, *Second Temple Songs of Zion. A Literary and Generic Analysis of the Apostrophe to Zion (11QPs<sup>a</sup> XXII 1-15), Tobit 13:9-18 and 1 Baruch 4:30-5:9* (DCLS 17; Berlin – Boston 2014) 107-108; L. T. Stuckenbruck – S. D. E. Weeks, “The Medieval Hebrew and Aramaic Texts of Tobit”, *Intertextual Studies in Ben Sira and Tobit. Essays in Honour of Alexander A. di Lella, O.F.M.* (ed. J. Corley – V. Skemp) (CBQMS 38; Washington: The Catholic Biblical Association of America 2005) 71-86, 71-72; A. A. Di Lella, “Tobit. Introduction and Translation”, *A New English Translation of the Septuagint* (ed. A. Pietersma – B. G. Wright) (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2007) 456-477, 456-457; F. Macatangay, *Wisdom Instructions in the Book of Tobit* (DCLS 12; Berlin – New York: De Gruyter 2011) 17. G<sup>I</sup>, a shorter text, is attested in many Greek manuscripts, the most important of which are Codex Alexandrinus and Codex Vaticanus. G<sup>II</sup>, a longer text, is preserved in Codex Sinaiticus, while G<sup>III</sup> is found in two Greek cursive manuscripts, 106 and 107, which preserve 6:9 to 12:22. G<sup>III</sup> is also found in the Syro-Hexapla version, in which Tob 7:11-12:22 has been preserved; Henderson, *Second Temple Songs*, 108. The base text for the Vetus Latina may have also been the Hebrew text; see Xeravits, *A deuterokanonikus könyvek*, 40.
  - 2 J. J. Collins, *Introduction to the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress 2004) 545.
  - 3 Xeravits, *A deuterokanonikus könyvek*, 46; Henderson, *Second Temple Songs*, 109.
  - 4 J. Hicks-Keeton, “Already/Not Yet: Eschatological Tension in the Book of Tobit”, *JBL* 132/1 (2013) 97-117, 114-117; D. Dimant, “The Book of Tobit and Qumran Halakhah”, *The Dynamics of Language and Exegesis at Qumran* (ed. D. Dimant – R. G. Kratz) (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2009)
-

The Book of Tobit consists of a narrative text, interspersed with prayers (Tob 3:2-6; 3:11-15; 8:5-8; 8:15-17; 11:14-15; 13:1-18) and wisdom sayings (Tob 4:3-19; 12:6-11; 14:8-11). A variety of terms such as “novella,” “short story,” “fairy tale” or “Hebrew romance” has been used to describe the work.<sup>5</sup>

## 2. The Unity of the Book

Various reasons gave rise to the assumption that the Book of Tobit is the result of extensive redactional activity. These include for instance the different genres employed, the fact that Tobit's and his kins' storyline has seemingly nothing to do with the poetic parts of the book, that the main part is framed by a prologue (1:1-2) and an epilogue (14:2-15) similarly to the Book of Job, the change in narrative voice – from first person singular speech to third person singular in 3:6-7 – or the inclusion of admonitions in chapter 2 and 12. Therefore, especially chapters 13 and 14 are considered later additions primarily by those who use a diachronic approach to describe the work's composition.<sup>6</sup> However, diachronic methods are difficult to apply to Tobit on the basis of the Greek recensions and the Semitic textual evidence is fragmentary. If indeed the *Urtext* of Tobit is Semitic, the Greek recensions cannot serve as the basis for diachronic analysis.<sup>7</sup> Beate Ego has pointed out that source critical analysis can only be made using the original text in order to achieve sound conclusions based on stylistic differences

---

121-143, 122-140 suggests that the Book of Tobit, while addressed to Jews in the Diaspora, may have been written in Yehud by a Jewish author who knew well the halakhic practices current there. See also Henderson, *Second Temple Songs*, 107-110.

- 5 I. Nowell, “The Book of Tobit”, *NIB* III, 973-1071, 978; I. Nowell, *The Book of Tobit. Narrative Technique and Theology* (Diss. Ph.D; Washington: The Catholic University of America 1983) 50.
- 6 See Xeravits, *A deuteronikanikus könyvek*, 43-44; for the discussion of the composition of the book see J. T. Milik, „La patrie de Tobie”, *RB* 73 (1966) 522-530; P. Deselaers, *Das Buch Tobit. Studien zu Seiner Entstehung, Komposition und Theologie* (OBO 43; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1982) 374-500; M. Rabenau, *Studien zum Buch Tobit* (BZAW 220; Berlin – New York: De Gruyter 1994) 67-190. According to Kaiser, the diachronic analyses of Deselaers and Rabenau suggest that Tobit reflects an extensive literary development; O. Kaiser, *The Old Testament Apocrypha. An Introduction* (Peabody: Hendrickson 2004) 35; Macatangay, *Wisdom Instructions*, 7-43, esp. 8; J. A. Fitzmyer, *Tobit* (CEJL; Berlin – New York 2003) 42. J. J. Collins, “The Judaism of the Book of Tobit”, *The Book of Tobit. Text, Tradition, Theology* (ed. G. Gy. Xeravits – J. Zsengellér) (Leiden – Boston: Brill 2005) 23-40, 25, argues that parts of the frame of the story – the passage emphasizing Tobit's piety towards Jerusalem in chapter 1 and parts of chapters 13 and 14 with their eschatological view – are secondary additions reflecting Judean editing, because the concern for Jerusalem and for the reunification of Israel is extraneous to the main narrative.
- 7 Macatangay, *Wisdom Instructions*, 23.
-

or diverse tendencies.<sup>8</sup> In addition, a narrative can have tensions and the presence of inconsistencies does not necessarily indicate an editorial hand.<sup>9</sup> Since all of the chapters are represented among the Qumran fragments, the majority of the book must have been ready by the beginning of the 1st century B.C.<sup>10</sup> According to George Nickelsburg, the “author has composed a complex but well-integrated story that depicts real human beings and their emotions in life-like circumstances and that uses plots and characters to carry traditional themes from the Bible and ancient folklore”.<sup>11</sup> The story is an artistic whole in which the author made good use of the various genres at his disposal. The biblical allusions also seem to support this.<sup>12</sup> “Behind an allusion is an authorial intention with its network of references.... [and] the literary element called allusion pulls the diverse materials of the story together.”<sup>13</sup> Some of the biblical allusions may be summed up here, while some others will be treated later:<sup>14</sup>

The book frequently refers to the law of Moses. The patriarchal stories are also in the background of the quest to find a bride (Genesis 24; 29–35), while the language of blessing and curse in light of covenant fidelity or apostasy evokes Deuteronomy 28.<sup>15</sup> The subject of exile and return found in Deut 30:1-10 appears in Tobit 13–14,<sup>16</sup> which may suggest that the author used deuteronomic themes in

8 B. Ego, “Buch Tobit”, *Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit II* (ed. H. Lichtenberger) (Gütersloh: Mohn 1999) 873-1007, 890.

9 Macatangay, *Wisdom Instructions*, 23-24.

10 Xeravits, *A deuterokanonikus könyvek*, 43; Macatangay, *Wisdom Instructions*, 34.

11 G. W. E. Nickelsburg, “Stories of Biblical and Early Post-Biblical Times”, *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period* (ed. M. E. Stone) (CRINT 2; Assen: Van Gorcum; Philadelphia: Fortress 1984) 33-87, 40.

12 B. D. Sommer, “Exegesis, Allusion and Intertextuality in the Hebrew Bible. A Response to Lyle Eslinger”, *JSOT* 46 (1996) 479-489, 486-487.

13 Macatangay, *Wisdom Instructions*, 25. As Macatangay formulates, “Tobit is not a product of multiple redactions and significant additions but of multiple influences as indicated by the proliferation of allusions and network of textual references. It is a narrative crafted and told by a skillful storyteller with a keen comic sense and wholly aware of his reader’s cultural sensibilities. In a way, the author of Tobit is more like a poet who weaves than a scholar who picks through the piles of thread rent by the nib of his pen.” See Macatangay, *Wisdom Instructions*, 34. Furthermore: „The author weaves together Jewish and non-Jewish literary elements to craft an entertaining, encouraging and edifying story about Jewish life in the Diaspora, demonstrating that God always responds to the righteousness of his people, albeit sometimes in ways not immediately evident.” Macatangay, *Wisdom Instructions*, 7.

14 One of the biblical models may have been the story of Joseph. In Gen 47:27–48:22, at the end of the Joseph cycle, Jacob in his testament asks for an honorable burial and predicts the restoration to the homeland, while in Genesis 49 gives a final poetic speech about the future as does Tobit in chapter 13; see Macatangay, *Wisdom Instructions*, 34-35; Nowell, “The Book of Tobit”, 981. Further biblical models include: Job 1:1–2:13; 42:7-17 (Tob 1:1–3:17; 12:1–14:15); Amos 8:10 (Tob 2:6; Tob 14:3), the prophecies against Nineveh in the Books of Nahum and Jonah (Tob 14:3–4); wisdom passages in Tobit reflect those of the books of Proverbs and Ben Sira.

15 J. F. Craghan, *Esther, Judith, Tobit, Jonah, Ruth* (OTM 16; Wilmington: Glazier 1982), 132.

16 Deuteronomic words and phrases such as “with your whole heart” and “the good land” are used in Tobit. For example, “with your whole heart” (Tob 2:2; 4Q196), “from the good land” (Tob 14:4), “in

order to encourage and console the Jewish people living in the Diaspora by emphasizing that God is faithful, merciful and his promises are still valid.<sup>17</sup> Weitzman attempts to draw up an allusive strategy present in the book. By linking Tobit 13 to Deuteronomy 32 (e.g. Tob 13:2 – Deut 32:39; Tob 13:6 – Deut 32:20), he links Tobit 12–13 to Deuteronomy 31–32 and concludes that biblical allusions in Tobit move from the beginning of the Pentateuch to its end.<sup>18</sup> In conclusion, through allusions the author “enters into a discourse with his past scriptural tradition in order to craft a narrative that responds to the needs of his readers”.<sup>19</sup>

### 3. The Role of Chapter 13 and Its Examination in the Light of the Following Topics: God's Kingship, Resurrection, Retribution

Tobit 13 is usually divided into two main poetic units, 13:1-8 and 13:9-18. According to Henderson, v. 7-8, 9b are transitional verses between v. 1-6 and 9a, 10-18. The latter shows a concentric structure in which the central idea is Jerusalem's joy at the return of her righteous children (v. 13).<sup>20</sup> The first unit (13:1-8) contains an invocation and an exhortation addressed to Israel to praise God, followed by a call to repentance and the hope of restoration. The second unit (13:9-18), addressed to Jerusalem personified as a woman, encourages her with the hope of the future restoration, glory and the return of the exiles – a theme developed in prose in chapter 14. The two units are related to each other by means of the verbal pair “chastise”/“afflict” – “have mercy”, “scattered” – “gathered”, “grieve” – “rejoice”.<sup>21</sup> In addition, the thematic unity reflecting intentionality on the part of the author is supported by the following characteristics: the exhortations to acknowledge and praise God, addressed to Israel (13:3-4) and to Jerusalem (13:10); the common titles for God, such as “King of Heaven” (13:7.11.16) and “King of the Ages” (13:6.10); a shared doxological terminology; the eternal reign and uni-

---

the land of Abraham” (Tob 14:7) among others. See Macatangay, *Wisdom Instructions*, 31-32.

<sup>17</sup> Macatangay, *Wisdom Instructions*, 32.

<sup>18</sup> He also notes the following allusion: when the angel Raphael gives his final command to Tobit and his son Tobias, he says, “Now write for yourselves all these words in a book”, a statement that seems to reflect a conflation of Deut 31:19 and Deut 31:24. See also Raphael's description of the book as a “witness” which recalls the description of the Song of Moses as a “witness” in Deut 31:19. These citations indicate that the link between the Song of Moses and the Hymn of Tobit was perceived by the scribe who wove the citations into the narrative of Tobit; see S. Weitzman, “Allusion, Artifice, and Exile in the Hymn of Tobit”, *JBL* 115/1 (1996) 49-61.

<sup>19</sup> Macatangay, *Wisdom Instructions*, 29 and Craghan, *Esther, Judith, Tobit, Jonah, Ruth*, 132.

<sup>20</sup> Henderson, *Second Temple Songs*, 142.

<sup>21</sup> Nowell, “The Book of Tobit”, 1064.

versal dominion of God as the focus of the first section and the realization of that reign in Jerusalem as the focus of the second.<sup>22</sup> The narrative opening (13:1a) and conclusion (14:1) bind the song, as does the pair of benedictions (13:1.18) which provides its frame. 13:3-8, addressed to Israel, deals with the theme of the affliction and mercy of God as demonstrated in the dispersion of the nation and the possibility of return as a result of repentance. In 13:9-18 the emphasis is on the city which will rejoice upon God's salvation.<sup>23</sup> The theme of praise is also recurring.<sup>24</sup>

### 3.1. God's Kingship, Transcendence and Sovereignty<sup>25</sup>

Tob 13:1b-6h is delineated with the *inclusio* of God's eternal kingship (13:1b.6h), revealing a thematic unity.<sup>26</sup> As noted above, 13:7-9 appears to be a transition to connect the preceding song – referring to Israel in exile – with the following song addressed to Zion. 13:1 depicts God as King, as do 13:7 (“King of heaven”), 13:10 (“King of the ages”), 13:11 (“King of heaven”) and 13:15 (“the Great King”). “Jerusalem” – as the place where God will be acknowledged and worshipped – is found in both v. 8 and 9, setting the theme for especially 13:8-11 and 13:11-15.<sup>27</sup> The passage in Tob 13:9a.10-18 connects the theme of joy over the future restoration, the glory of Jerusalem and the return of the exiles with that of God as eternal ruler of the world. A recurring word here is αἰών:

v. 10.: εἰς πάσας τὰς γενεὰς τοῦ αἰῶνος: “for all the generations of the age”

v. 11.: εἰς τὰς γενεὰς τοῦ αἰῶνος: “for the generations of the world/age”

v. 12.: εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα: “forever”

v. 14.: εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα: “forever”

v. 15.: εἰς πάντας τοὺς αἰῶνας: “for all the ages”

v. 18.: εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ ἔτι: “for ever and ever.”<sup>28</sup>

<sup>22</sup> See also P. J. Griffin, *A Study of Eleēmosynē in the Bible with Emphasis upon its Meaning and Usage in the Theology of Tobit and Ben Sira* (Thesis, M.A., Washington: The Catholic University of America 1982) 224-348.

<sup>23</sup> G. W. Nickelsburg, “Tobit”, *The HarperCollins Bible Commentary* (ed. J. L. Mays) (San Francisco: Harper 2000) 719-731, 729-731; Nowell, “The Book of Tobit”, 1061-1062 draws attention to the influence of the book of Deuteronomy on chapter 13.

<sup>24</sup> Nowell, “The Book of Tobit”, 1062. Apart from the similarities, the differences between 13:1-8 and 13:9-18 are also noted by Henderson, *Second Temple Songs*, 117.

<sup>25</sup> The text of Tob 13:1-6h is based on G<sup>II</sup>, 13:6i-10b on G<sup>I</sup>, and 13:10c-18 on G<sup>II</sup>; their translation follows that of the NETS.

<sup>26</sup> Henderson, *Second Temple Songs*, 141.

<sup>27</sup> Henderson, *Second Temple Songs*, 142.

<sup>28</sup> Henderson, *Second Temple Songs*, 143.

Similar terminology and themes are also important in the Psalter that employs kingship language about God in a number of psalms (Ps 93:5; 96:8–9; 97:8; 99:2.5.9, as well as Psalms 145; 146). In addition, the rule of the sovereign God is reflected in Tob 13:2 as well as in Ps 47:3; 95:3; 97:1.6.9.29 The praise of such a ruler is reflected in passages that deal with the splendour of Jerusalem, such as in Tob 13:16–18, which is an allusion to Isa 54:11–12. In comparison with its biblical model, the song – in its context (Tob 13:9–18) – emphasizes the praise of God emanating from the city, rather than the impression of her impregnability. Another difference between them is that while Isa 54:11–12 probably refers to the Second Temple, in Tob 13:9–18 it is the eschatological Temple in which God, the king – described using divine titles – is to be praised.<sup>30</sup> In the Hebrew Bible the metaphor of his kingship generally refers to three relational spheres: God as a) covenantal sovereign of Israel, b) universal ruler over creation, and c) monarch of the disadvantaged or marginalized. These ideas are also reflected in Second Temple Jewish literature, including the prayers of Tobit where God is described as king and ruler, especially protecting Israel.<sup>31</sup> Even though in Tobit 13 the expression “God’s kingdom” does not occur – only “his kingdom (ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ)” is found –, it is evident from the context that Tobit blesses God’s kingdom. In Tob 13:2 this kingdom is associated with the eternal nature of God. The term in 13:2 (“For he afflicts and he shows mercy”, ὅτι αὐτὸς μαστιγοῖ καὶ ἐλεᾷ) evokes resurrection language. Even though different words are used in Hos 6:1 (“for it is he who has torn, and he will heal us; he has struck down, and he will bind us up”, ὅτι αὐτὸς ἤρπακεν καὶ ἰάσεται ἡμᾶς πατάξει καὶ μοτώσει ἡμᾶς; וְשִׁבְרֵנוּ יִקְרָא וְיִרְפָּאנוּ וְיִרְפָּאנוּ וְיִרְפָּאנוּ וְיִרְפָּאנוּ), the ideas are similar. It is necessary to view Tob 13:2 in its context. The tone of 13:1–8 is general and the exhortation is for the nation. However, in line 13:6i–j the author speaks in first person singular (“In the land of my captivity, I acknowledge him, and I show his power and majesty to a nation of sinners”, in GI: ἐγὼ ἐν τῇ γῆ τῆς αἰχμαλωσίας μου ἐξομολογοῦμαι αὐτῷ καὶ δεικνύω τὴν ἰσχὺν καὶ τὴν μεγαλωσύνην αὐτοῦ ἔθνει ἀμαρτωλῶν). In the background one cannot but discover the voice of the individual. The individual tone also appears in the final verses of the chapter: 13:16c–d reads: “Happy shall I be if a remnant of my seed should be present to see your glory and to ac-

<sup>29</sup> Henderson, *Second Temple Songs*, 149–150 lists a variety of other themes that appear in both Tobit and the Psalter: the confession of God before the nations: Tob 13:3 – Ps 96:3.10; 98:2; the relationship of God with Israel: Tob 13:4 – Ps 47:4–5; Ps 98:3; 99:8; God’s actions with Israel in history: Tob 13:6 (Ps 95:7–11; 99:6–8); she also notes that the eschatological element is part of the hope for Israel’s return (Tob 13:5–6) and the rebuilding of Jerusalem (Tob 13:10–11.15–18), while in the psalms treating the theme of God’s kingship the future eschatological, righteous reign of God can be pointed out (Ps 96:13; 98:9, see also Tob 13:4 and Ps 95:7 for the expression: “he is our God”).

<sup>30</sup> Henderson, *Second Temple Songs*, 158–162.

<sup>31</sup> A. Moore, *Moving Beyond Symbol and Myth. Understanding the Kingship of God in the Hebrew Bible Through Metaphor* (SBL 99; New York: Peter Lang 2009) 4.

knowledge the King of Heaven.” This underlines that descendants are important, even more so descendants who are as pious as Tobias who was instructed not to marry a gentile woman but his own kin. Such a descendant can be expected to appreciate the sight of Zion and will acknowledge the King of Heaven. Taken into consideration the story-line, it is noteworthy that Tobias was thought to have been lost on his journey. From this point of view Tobit’s desire to see him alive and to rejoice over his son’s wisdom and righteousness can be understood. 13:18 is relevant in this respect: “And the blessed will bless his holy Name for ever and ever.” Who else could be considered more blessed than Tobit’s family members? Such blessings include Tobias’ marriage to a pious kinswoman, Tobit’s restored health and dignity, wealth and long life.

But what does restoration mean for the nation? How is resurrection to be understood? The rest of 13:2 reads: “he leads down to Hades in the lowest part of the earth,<sup>32</sup> and he brings up from the great destruction, and there is nothing that will escape his hand”. Behind Tob 13:2 echoes of Deut 32:39//1Sam 2:6 are found. In Deut 32:39 the antithetically parallel root pair רפא//מחץ is echoed by the pair μαστιγόω//ἐλεάω in Tob 13:2a and the pair מות//חיה is echoed by the pair κατάγω//ἀνάγω in Tob 13:2b-c. The final colon in Deut 32:39, וְאֵין מַדִּי מַצִּיל (“and no one can deliver from my hand”) is echoed in the final colon of Tob 13:2, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ὃς ἐκφεύξεται τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ (“and there is nothing that will escape his hand”). This influence has been combined with a stylistically and thematically similar verse from Hannah’s song of thanksgiving in 1Sam 2:6, יְהוָה הַמָּוֶת וְהַחַיִּים מוֹרִיד וְמוֹרִיד שְׂאוֹל וְיַעֲלֶה (“The LORD kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up”), in which the verbal pair מוריד//יעל is identical to the pair κατάγω//ἀνάγω in Tob 13:2, as is the equivalence of שואל and ἄδης.<sup>33</sup>

Deut 32:39 reads: “See now that I, even I, am he; there is no god besides me. I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and no one can deliver from my hand.” The verse is found within the song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32). The first half of 32:39 makes it clear that the focus is on polemy against other “gods”. The idea of Israel provoking God by turning to idols is recurring in the song. God created Israel, there is no other “god” (see Isa 43:10). Only he can create or make live, he is King of the universe. The purpose of the allusion to the song envisioning the conquest of the promised land at the end of the wilderness wanderings is to hold out hope for the exiles concerning the impending return to the homeland.<sup>34</sup> One of the connecting elements between the two texts is the emphasis on the major turning point in their history. In addition, as Weitzman argues, if we link Tobit 12–13 to Deuteronomy 31–32 and take into consideration other allusions to other

<sup>32</sup> 4Q200 6 6 has the term “below to Sheol”.

<sup>33</sup> Henderson, *Second Temple Songs*, 150-151, Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, 307; Moore, *Moving Beyond Symbol*, 285.

<sup>34</sup> Macatangay, *Wisdom Instructions*, 36.

parts of the Pentateuch – e.g. the patriarchal stories –, it may be stated that “the narrative patterns of Israel’s sacred past continue into Israel’s exilic present, the allusion to the Song of Moses at the end of Tobit intimates that this present will culminate in a finale also prescribed by the Pentateuch – with Israel soon returning to the land promised to it just as its biblical ancestors once did”.<sup>35</sup>

We read in 1Sam 2:6: “The Lord kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up.” Since the verse is found in Hannah’s song of thanksgiving (1Sam 2:1-10) for the birth of Samuel, the individual is in focus. However, the song in its entirety praises God’s uncontested power. He is almighty king and judge of the earth, for whom nothing is impossible. For Hannah it means that from her barren womb children can be born.

If God is the ultimate source of physical life, he is powerful enough to both end life and restore it (Deut 32:39; 1Sam 2:6). Since he created, he is capable of re-creating.<sup>36</sup> Creation in the Bible is seen according to the Yahwist creation account as God forming the first human from dust, breaths into his nostrils the breath of life without which he returns to dust. Thus the promise of resurrection is linked to creation. If Gen 3:19.23-24 in the context of the story of the original sin concerning the return of humans into dust<sup>37</sup> and being expelled from the Garden of Eden was connected with the thought of Israel’s expulsion from the promised land – which may be conjectured but not evidenced as Wright notes –,<sup>38</sup> then the fate of the nation and that of the body is connected. As Wright points out, when the prophets speak of national catastrophe and restoration, there is a “creative fluidity between the restoration of Israel to the land and the new bodily creation of human beings after the state of death”.<sup>39</sup> As Wright observes, resurrection is not an extraneous thought in Israelite thinking but the “continuing affirmation of the Jewish hope for restoration, for liberation from exile, persecution and

<sup>35</sup> Weitzman, “Allusion, Artifice”, 61.

<sup>36</sup> J. Paulien, “The Resurrection and the Old Testament. A Fresh Look in Light of Recent Research”, *JATS* 24/1 (2013) 3-24, 22; R. Martin-Achard, “Resurrection (Old Testament)”, *ABD* V, 680-684, 684; Nickelsburg, “Resurrection (Early Judaism and Christianity)”, *ABD* V, 684-691, 685. Generally, death was not feared. According to the Hebrew Bible, the individuals were content to go down to the grave as long as three conditions were met: 1) they had had a long and blessed life (Gen 15:15; Ex 20:12; Job 42:10-17), 2) they had left behind many descendants (Gen 15:17-18; 46:3), or at least a son (Deut 25:5-10), and 3) the proper burial rites were observed (Gen 49:29-32; 2Sam 3:30-39; Jer 16:1-7). Untimely death or the lack of descendants were perceived as divine punishment; see Martin-Achard, “Resurrection”, 680; G. von Rad, *Old Testament Theology I* (New York: Harper and Row 1972) 389-390.

<sup>37</sup> See also Ps 7:5; 22:15.29; 30:9; 104:29; 119:25; 146:4; Eccl 12:7.

<sup>38</sup> N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God. Christian Origins and the Question of God III* (Minneapolis: Fortress 2003) 122.

<sup>39</sup> Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 123.

suffering”.<sup>40</sup> In Ezekiel 37, for instance, the language of death and bodily resurrection can be used as a metaphor for the exile and return of the whole nation.

### 3.2. The Term “Everlasting Place” in Tob 3:6

While the interpretation of resurrection is not made easier by the examination of Tobit’s so-called “death-wish” in chapter 3, it is necessary to briefly look at the expression “...to the everlasting place” (εἰς τὸν τόπον τὸν αἰώνιον) in Tob 3:6. Whether it simply means grave, without the connotation of belief in life after death is difficult to decide, even by comparison with other passages in the Hebrew Bible that use similar terms (Isa 33:17 LXX; Eccl 12:5), since the understanding of these latter passages is also problematic.<sup>41</sup> At the level of the individual in Tobit the solution is this worldly, resembling wisdom thought concerning especially the chain of act and consequence. It is more probable, that there is no evidence for hope for an otherworldly realm or solution in Tob 3:6. With the nation, however, it is a different matter. The fate of the nation becomes clear only in the future.<sup>42</sup> There is a certain ambiguity in Tobit’s prayers concerning the fate of the individual and of the collective.<sup>43</sup> Tob 13:2 employs Deuteronomic ideas of Sin-Exile-Retribution in proximity to the Zion song in 13:9-18. Jerusalem, “a symbol of the endurance and supremacy of Israel as God’s people,”<sup>44</sup> represents a switch from the this worldly solution to an eschatological one.<sup>45</sup> While the “everlasting place” (3:6) may only be a reference to “grave”, God’s dwelling place for all ages (13:6) is the symbol of a realized eschatology, a transcendent and universal solution for Israel.<sup>46</sup> The suffering and sins of Tobit mirror those of the nation, his healing, hope and joy mirror that of Jerusalem and Israel. This means that, concerning retribution, his fate and that of Israel is connected. In this regard his prayer in chapter 3 needs to be taken into account for other reasons as well.<sup>47</sup> In comparison with Sarah’s personal prayer in Tob 3:7-17,

<sup>40</sup> Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 121.

<sup>41</sup> S. Beyerle, “‘Release Me to Go to My Everlasting Home...’ (Tob 3:6). A Belief in An Afterlife in Late Wisdom Literature?”, *The Book of Tobit. Text, Tradition, Theology* (ed. G. Gy. Xeravits – J. Zsengellér) (Leiden – Boston: Brill 2005) 71-88, 72-75.

<sup>42</sup> Beyerle, “‘Release Me’”, 82, 84.

<sup>43</sup> Beyerle, “‘Release Me’”, 82.

<sup>44</sup> P. J. Griffin, *The Theology and Function of Prayer in the Book of Tobit* (Diss. Ph.D; Washington: The Catholic University of America 1984) 296.

<sup>45</sup> Beyerle, “‘Release Me’”, 85.

<sup>46</sup> Beyerle, “‘Release Me’”, 86; Nowell, “The Book of Tobit”, 1065.

<sup>47</sup> As B. Ego, “The Book of Tobit and the Diaspora”, *The Book of Tobit. Text, Tradition, Theology* (ed. G. Gy. Xeravits – J. Zsengellér) (Leiden – Boston: Brill 2005) 41-54, 52, argues, Tob 13:5-6 may be understood as a “universalization of Tobit’s experiences”; his fate is a model for the fate of Israel and gives reason for the hope of redemption.

Tobit's prayer refers to him and his forefathers, his own sin, and theirs. This is significant, since from the point of the view of the protagonist, individual and nation cannot be separated. Tobit asks God not to punish him for his own or his ancestors' sins.<sup>48</sup> In 13:3-6 individual and collective is also intertwined. Tobit among the foreign nations is a witness to God's gracious acts for the righteous ones among Israel. His and his kins' experiences function as a "revelation of God's power to the Gentiles".<sup>49</sup>

#### 4. Second Temple Songs of Zion – Their Similarities and Differences

Apart from Tob 13:9-18 there are other Second Temple songs that are concerned with the future Jerusalem, representing a specific genre which is manifested in many characteristics these poems share. One of the significant features these works have in common is their opening address and frequent reference to Zion/Jerusalem. While only the *Ap Zion* (= 11QPs<sup>a</sup> XXII 1-15) refers to Jerusalem as Zion, Tob 13:9-18 and 1Bar 4:30-5:9 also exhibit a Zion theology similar to that found in Isaiah 40-66 which has highly influenced these poems. The formal characteristics include rhetorical organization; an abundance of second feminine singular forms used in reference to Zion; a frequent use of imperatives addressed to Zion; all display a concentric structure with the main idea at their centre.<sup>50</sup> All other concepts have a circular arrangement around the centre. Substantive features include the basic image (Zion "personified as a mother bereft of her children, who is to be transformed by the glory of God and the return of her children"<sup>51</sup>); the major themes (eschatological return of Zion's children; overthrow of Zion's enemies; future glory of Zion; joy; Zion in a restored relationship with God; Zion as the radiant centre of the world and the centre of God's retributive justice; a variety of allusions to Scripture).<sup>52</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Punishment is seen here as humiliation when God removes his protection from his people, see R. Egger-Wenzel, "Sarah's Grief to Death (Tob 3:7-17)", *Ancient Jewish Prayers and Emotions. Emotions Associated with Jewish Prayer in and Around the Second Temple Period* (ed. S. C. Reif – R. Egger-Wenzel) (Berlin – Boston: De Gruyter 2015) 193-219, 194-195, 201.

<sup>49</sup> Ego, "The Book of Tobit and the Diaspora", 53.

<sup>50</sup> In *Ap Zion*, it is an assurance that Zion's hope will not be lost (unit I, lines 8-9); in Tob 13:9-18 it is an exhortation to Jerusalem to rejoice at the return of her children in righteousness, who will bless God within her (13:13); in 1Bar 4:30-5:9 it is the reversal of Jerusalem from mourning to joy, from loss of children to return of children (4:37a).

<sup>51</sup> Henderson, *Second Temple Songs*, 283.

<sup>52</sup> Henderson, *Second Temple Songs*, 303-307.

One of the most important differences between them is their respective literary settings. The *Ap Zion* has been collected in an anthology of songs comprising mostly psalms from the Masoretic biblical Psalter, in addition to a number of other songs which, like the Masoretic biblical psalms, have been attributed to David. As Henderson notes, many have suggested a liturgical function for 11QPs<sup>a</sup> since it reflects clear liturgical groupings.<sup>53</sup> In the Book of Tobit the Zion song is embedded in Tobit's and his family's story-line, a narrative that has the purpose of praising God for restoring the sight – and life – of the protagonist and of “accentuating the analogy... between the destiny of exiled Tobit and that of exiled Israel”,<sup>54</sup> while in 1Baruch the “song comprises one of a disparate collection of religious pieces which form a meditation on repentance and restoration for Israel”.<sup>55</sup>

## 5. Concluding Remarks

Out of the three Zion songs it is Tob 13:9-18 that fits most tightly into its context and became an important part of the story-line emphasizing the piety of Tobit, who – despite of persecution and blindness – has faith and praises God. While they may all have been used for liturgical purposes, important concepts, images and themes connect Tob 13:9-18 and the chapter containing it with other parts of Tobit. Even if the song was composed and existed separately before being inserted into its present place, its position and theological teachings are in harmony with those of the entire book. This has bearings on the teaching of Tob 13:2 as well concerning God's kingship, retribution and resurrection.

In this regard, it is also important that the fate of the individual and that of the nation is connected, the retribution of the individual and of the community is intertwined. This is clear from the mixing of the singular and plural narrative voice in chapter 13. God's kingship plays an important role here. Tobit as a person praises God – emphasizing his kingship – for restoring him and for his mercy towards the nation and Jerusalem. Overarching themes such as blindness, seeing and the entailing thanksgiving for restored sight – supporting the unity of the book – are also important. The restoration of Tobit's and his family's life, Tobias' safe return – and the fact that his parents have lived to see him (Tob

<sup>53</sup> Psalms 104; 147; 105; 146: hallelujah psalms; Psalm 145 with an added liturgical refrain, grouped with two hallelujah psalms (Psalms 135; 136); the Songs of Ascent in a slightly rearranged order and – possibly – the Hallel collection of Psalms 113–118 (only Psalm 118 survives), see Henderson, *Second Temple Songs*, 308.

<sup>54</sup> Henderson, *Second Temple Songs*, 308.

<sup>55</sup> Henderson, *Second Temple Songs*, 309.

11:9.14) – signify the restoration and return of God's people from the exile, who will rebuild Jerusalem that will be the radiant centre of the earth (13:11). As Portier-Young notes, "The Book of Tobit gives new sight to a people blinded in the darkness of exile, to see God, to know God will deliver and restore them, and to know that God works among them and strengthens them in every place and every hour".<sup>56</sup>

At the level of the individual the hope for restoration is also the hope for liberation from suffering, and healing or restoration is experienced as resurrection. Belief in the nature of God and the nature of his relationship to Israel – his mercy and love for creation and for Israel embodied in his covenant faithfulness – has led to the belief that the relationship with God is unbreakable even by death and that God would raise the dead. Therefore, God's love and faithfulness are not only for this life. Through victory over death, God demonstrated his ultimate faithfulness and love toward his own people.<sup>57</sup> In other words, the hope of the individual and of the nation rests on the same principle, the power and mercy of God whose kingship connects the fate of the individual and of the nation in Tobit 13. He is sovereign and king of Tobit's life who – due to the misfortunes of his life (blindness, endangered life, concern for the welfare of the long-gone and not returning son) – was in need of help. The nation was also in need: in need of forgiveness, in need of certainty that God still loves Zion and Israel, and in need of restoration. One of the aspects of this kingship is God's eternal nature and his unlimited powers. He is able to restore people and conquer all enemies, for him nothing is impossible. While the Book of Tobit uses eschatological ideas about the future Jerusalem, at the level of a person's life we can only assume safely that for the writer God's power was unlimited. He, as Creator, King of Heaven has power over death. What comes after life, however, is shrouded in mystery. In this respect the book is closer to the Book of Ben Sira which suggests that life can be prolonged by pious life, for instance by giving alms (Sir 3:1-16). The idea of reciprocity is present in Tobit – as in Ben Sira – but sincere kindness and compassion is also the motivation for being pious (e.g. burying the dead).

It is purposeful that by the allusions to the song of Moses and the thanksgiving of Hannah, in the Book of Tobit three stories come together to emphasize the greatness and mercy of God, and express the belief that life without his mercy and blessings feels like death, while living in the right relationship with him and experiencing his forgiveness and restoration is like resurrection or life renewed.

<sup>56</sup> A. Portier-Young, "'Eyes to the Blind': A Dialogue Between Tobit and Job", *Intertextual Studies in Ben Sira and Tobit. Essays in Honour of Alexander A. di Lella, O.F.M.* (ed. J. Corley – V. Skemp) (CBQMS 38; Washington: The Catholic Biblical Association of America 2005) 14-27, 27.

<sup>57</sup> Paulien, "Resurrection", 21-22.

## Bibliography

- Beyerle, S., “‘Release Me to Go to My Everlasting Home...’ (Tob 3:6). A Belief in An Afterlife in Late Wisdom Literature?”, *The Book of Tobit. Text, Tradition, Theology* (ed. G. Gy. Xeravits – J. Zsengellér) (Leiden – Boston: Brill 2005) 71-88.
- Collins, J. J., *Introduction to the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress 2004).
- , “The Judaism of the Book of Tobit”, *The Book of Tobit. Text, Tradition, Theology* (ed. G. Gy. Xeravits – J. Zsengellér) (Leiden – Boston: Brill 2005) 23-40.
- Craghan, J. F., *Esther, Judith, Tobit, Jonah, Ruth* (OTM 16; Wilmington: Glazier 1982).
- Deselaers, P., *Das Buch Tobit. Studien zu Seiner Entstehung, Komposition und Theologie* (OBO 43; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1982).
- Di Lella, A. A., “Tobit. Introduction and Translation”, *A New English Translation of the Septuagint* (ed. A. Pietersma – B. G. Wright) (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2007) 456-477.
- Dimant, D., “The Book of Tobit and Qumran Halakhah”, *The Dynamics of Language and Exegesis at Qumran* (ed. D. Dimant – R. G. Kratz) (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2009) 121-143.
- Egger-Wenzel, R., “Sarah’s Grief to Death (Tob 3:7-17)”, *Ancient Jewish Prayers and Emotions. Emotions Associated with Jewish Prayer in and Around the Second Temple Period* (ed. S. C. Reif – R. Egger-Wenzel) (Berlin – Boston: De Gruyter 2015) 193-219.
- Ego, B., “Buch Tobit”, *Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit II* (ed. H. Lichtenberger) (Gütersloh: Mohn 1999).
- , “The Book of Tobit and the Diaspora”, *The Book of Tobit. Text, Tradition, Theology* (ed. G. Gy. Xeravits – J. Zsengellér) (Leiden – Boston: Brill 2005) 41-54.
- Fitzmyer, J. A. *Tobit* (CEJL; Berlin – New York 2003).
- Griffin, P. J., *A Study of Eleēmosynē in the Bible with Emphasis upon its Meaning and Usage in the Theology of Tobit and Ben Sira* (Thesis, M.A., The Catholic University of America 1982).
- , *The Theology and Function of Prayer in the Book of Tobit* (Diss. Ph.D; Washington: The Catholic University of America 1984).
- Henderson, R., *Second Temple Songs of Zion. A Literary and Generic Analysis of the Apostrophe to Zion (11QPsa XXII 1–15), Tobit 13:9–18 and 1 Baruch 4:30–5:9* (DCLS 17; Berlin – Boston: De Gruyter 2014).
- Hicks-Keeton, J., “Already/Not Yet: Eschatological Tension in the Book of Tobit”, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 132/1 (2013) 97-117.
- Kaiser, O., *The Old Testament Apocrypha. An Introduction* (Peabody: Hendrickson 2004).
- Macatangay, F., *Wisdom Instructions in the Book of Tobit* (DCLS 12; Berlin– New York: De Gruyter 2011).
- Martin-Achard, R., “Resurrection (Old Testament)”, *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (ed. D.N. Freedman) (New York: Doubleday 1992) V, 680-684.
- Milik, J. T., “La patrie de Tobie”, *Revue biblique* 73 (1966) 522-530.
- Moore, A., *Moving Beyond Symbol and Myth. Understanding the Kingship of God in the Hebrew Bible Through Metaphor* (SBL 99; New York: Peter Lang 2009).
- Nickelsburg, G. W. E., “Stories of Biblical and Early Post-Biblical Times”, *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period* (ed. M. E. Stone) (CRINT 2; Assen: Van Gorcum; Philadelphia: Fortress 1984) 33-87.

- , “Resurrection (Early Judaism and Christianity)”, *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (ed. D.N. Freedman) (New York: Doubleday 1992) V, 684-691.
- , “Tobit”, *The HarperCollins Bible Commentary* (ed. J. L. Mays) (San Francisco: Harper 2000) 719-731.
- Nowell, I., *The Book of Tobit. Narrative Technique and Theology* (Diss. Ph.D; Washington: The Catholic University of America 1983).
- , “The Book of Tobit”, *The New Interpreter's Bible* (ed. L. E. Keck) (Nashville: Abingdon, 1999) III. 973-1071.
- Paulien, J., “The Resurrection and the Old Testament. A Fresh Look in Light of Recent Research”, *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 24/1 (2013) 3-24.
- Portier-Young, A., “‘Eyes to the Blind’. A Dialogue Between Tobit and Job”, *Intertextual Studies in Ben Sira and Tobit. Essays in Honour of Alexander A. di Lella, O.F.M.* (ed. J. Corley – V. Skemp) (CBQMS 38; Washington: The Catholic Biblical Association of America 2005).
- Rabenau, M., *Studien zum Buch Tobit* (BZAW 220; Berlin – New York: De Gruyter 1994).
- Rad, G. v., *Old Testament Theology I* (New York: Harper and Row 1972).
- Sommer, B. D., “Exegesis, Allusion and Intertextuality in the Hebrew Bible. A Response to Lyle Eslinger”, *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 46 (1996) 479-489.
- Stuckenbruck, L. T. – Weeks, S. D. E., “The Medieval Hebrew and Aramaic Texts of Tobit”, *Intertextual Studies in Ben Sira and Tobit. Essays in Honour of Alexander A. di Lella, O.F.M.* (ed. J. Corley – V. Skemp) (CBQMS 38; Washington: The Catholic Biblical Association of America 2005) 71-86.
- Xeravits, G., *A deuterokanonikus könyvek* (Deuterocanonica 4; Budapest: L'Harmattan 2008) 39-41.
- Weitzman, S., “Allusion, Artifice, and Exile in the Hymn of Tobit”, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 115/1 (1996) 49-61.
- Wright, N. T., *The Resurrection of the Son of God. Christian Origins and the Question of God III* (Minneapolis: Fortress 2003).

