

Tobias himself on his return summarized the good deeds of the angel by saying : « Father, what wages shall we give him or what can be worthy of his benefits ? He conducted me and brought me safe again ; he received the money of Gabelus ; he caused me to have my wife and he chased from her the evil spirit ; he gave joy to her parents ; myself he delivered from being devoured by the fish ; thee also he hath made to see the light of heaven and we are filled with all good things through him. What can we give him sufficient for these things ? But I beseech thee, my father, to desire him that he would vouchsafe to accept of one half of all things that have been brought. » All know the answer given by the Angel of God to the grateful father and son, and their surprise when he said : « When thou didst pray with tears and didst bury the dead and didst leave thy dinner and hide the dead by day in thy house and bury them at night, I offered thy prayer to the Lord. And because thou wast acceptable to God, it was necessary that temptation should prove thee. And now the Lord hath sent me to heal thee and to deliver Sara, thy son's wife, from the devil. For I am the Angel Raphael, one of the seven who stand before the Lord. »

At this revelation, troubled and seized with fear, father and son fell upon the ground on their face, but the angel gently reassured them : « Peace be to you he said ; fear not. For when I was with you, I was there by the will of God ; bless ye Him and sing praises to Him. I seemed indeed to eat and drink with you but I use an invisible meat and drink which cannot be seen by men. Bless ye then God and publish all his wonderful works ye have witnessed. »

After saying these words, the angel vanished and in vain did they seek him with their eyes. They remained prostrate for three hours and when Tobias arose, it was to sing a hymn of praise to God who had saved him (Tob. XII).

We admire the kindness of St. Raphael and the gratitude of Tobias. We are charmed to see an angel from heaven at work ; we must see in good angels not only envoys from God, friends and protectors, guides and guardians of mankind, but patterns and virtues to be imitated. And could we not, by