

Reading Questions

Tobit and Judith

Week 11

- What is the genre of these stories? What is the audience supposed to expect from them? How might this influence our understanding of some biblical (OT) texts?
- How do the authors of Tobit and Judith define covenant faithfulness (e.g., in the portrayal of the heroes Tobit, Sarah, and Judith)? What does this tell us about "boundary markers" at this time? To what extent are these figures intended to be role models for the audience?
- How do the books of Tobit and Judith suggest Diaspora Jewish communities ought to handle oppression? How does the book answer the problem of unjust suffering? How does this perspective compare to that of the other documents we have read this term (e.g., *1 Macc*, *2 Macc*, *4 Ezra*, *Pss. Sol.*)?
- What do these stories suggest about the way God works in history?
- Who are the villains in these stories? What do these portrayals imply about the status and fate of gentiles or Israelite sinners?
- What do these stories suggest about the future (or eschatological) goal toward which the authors are looking?
- What role do prayer and worship play in the narratives? What message is implied about these activities?
- How do these books depict women, their place in society, and their relationships with God? What does the great popularity of these stories suggest about the place of women in Second Temple Judaism?