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Zechariah xii. 2: The three clauses following "*Thus saith the Lord.*" Is this passage an interpolation by the same hand as Amos iv. 13; v. 8, 9; and ix. 5, 6?

Is. xi. 10: Is not this verse a gloss, *explaining* ver. 12 by reference to ver. 1? The last clause seems to repeat the idea of iv. 5; and the whole verse, otiose in itself, breaks the connection between 1-9 and its sequel 11-16.

G. H. SKIPWITH.

### Tobit and Genesis.

THERE is a general consensus of opinion that the book of Tobit was written with a tendency. But when that has been granted, the unanimity between critics is ended. The prevalent view probably is that Tobit was intended as a recommendation of active piety, a praise of good works, and of reliance on the power of Providence to justify its ways to man. Virtue was its own reward, but God would care that no man was the worse here or hereafter for his virtue. The ingenious theory of Dr. Graetz narrowed the motive of Tobit considerably. According to his brilliant and now well-known suggestion, the author of Tobit wished to inculcate the special duty of *burying the dead*, even at the price of adding others to the category. No danger was to be shunned or feared in the furtherance of the pious occupation of interring the dead. Professor Graetz had no difficulty in finding a fitting moment for the promulgation of such a book and such a moral. He found both amid the incidents associated in the reign of Hadrian with the fall of Bar Cochba and the massacre of the gallant defenders of Bether, who were denied even the privilege of interment.

There is no doubt that the references in Tobit to the burial of the dead are strikingly numerous. If one is disinclined to accept Professor Graetz's view, how are these repeated references to be accounted for?

My own reason for doubting the acceptability of Professor Graetz's hypothesis lies in the peculiar character of chapter iv. of Tobit. Here must be sought the author's intention, for the chapter contains the summary of his view of morality and praiseworthy conduct. The virtue which is chiefly lauded is charity. There is no specific counsel with regard to the duty of burying the dead until the 17th verse is reached, and the allusion is not repeated in the whole chapter. Of course it is hopeless to recover the real text of verse 17. It is

by no means clear that Tobit here recommends his son to address himself to the burial of the dead. "Pour out thy bread on the burial of the just" is certainly the Greek reading, but the other texts differ so considerably that a corruption of the original is, as most authorities admit, more than probable. At all events, even if the Greek text be accurate, the allusion seems to me too brief and casual in chapter iv., and the *omission* of even a doubtful allusion in the addresses of Tobit to his son in the later chapters is too marked and complete, to justify the supposition that the author of Tobit compiled the book in order to ensure the burial of the dead at a time when that duty was dangerous, and therefore liable to be neglected.

Yet it must be admitted that the references to this species of piety are fairly frequent in Tobit, and that an explanation is called for. Now, every one has noted the patriarchal character of the book, how the whole story is planned on patriarchal lines. It is needless to quote the coincidences; they are too numerous. And, naturally, as Genesis is the book that contains the story of the patriarchs, it was only to be expected that the author of the Book of Tobit should have consciously imitated the Book of Genesis. He has done this not only in style, but even in words and in whole passages. This coincidence has been often remarked, but I am not certain that its full import or extent had been grasped. The opening of chapter vii., in which Tobias meets Raguel, is very closely similar to the scene described in Genesis when Jacob goes to Laban. So Tobit calls his son to him, and uses much the same terms as Jacob on a similar occasion. These are only one or two out of many similar identities.

Now, the Book of Genesis is not only distinguished by its containing the patriarchal narratives. It has another peculiarity. In Genesis *there are more references to the duty of burial of the dead* than in any other Scriptural book. This assertion has, I think, only to be made in order to be seen to be true. It was, moreover, Jacob who summoned Joseph, and said, "If you will do unto me kindness and truth (חסד ואמת), do not bury me in Egypt" (Gen. xlvii. 29). On this Rashi, following the Midrash Rabba, remarks, "*Kindness and Truth*: the kindness that a man shows the dead is *kindness of truth*, for the doer has no hope of reward (from the person benefited)."

Thus, the author of Tobit, bent on drawing a patriarchal portrait, turned to Genesis for a model, and introduced as one of his most striking traits a feature which is also patriarchal, viz., the importance attaching to the burial of the dead. But more than that, he wished to inculcate the virtue of charity. Could any illustration be more to the point than the virtue of burying the dead? It was, according to an old Jewish idea, *the very*

*charity of truth.* There is nothing more remarkable, I think, in moral literature than the blending in Tobit of the doctrine, *Virtue is its own recompense*, with the doctrine, *Virtue will be surely rewarded.* Alms do deliver from death, and "if thou serve God, he will also repay thee." Yet Tobit himself, the pattern of piety, suffers so severely, that, like Job, he cried, "It is profitable for me to die rather than to live." But further, Tobit, unlike Job, does not come off in the end with an increment of prosperity. He simply becomes again as he was. He recovers his sight after eight years, but he does not gain any sudden or divinely-sent accession of wealth, and has those eight years of sorrow and tribulation, shall I say to the good or the bad? The author of Tobit was indeed torn two ways. Charity was a virtue to be followed, whatever its results; *yet* its results were surely profitable. And it must be confessed that this doctrine is not much out of accord with the full truth, so far as each of us knows it in his own experience.

I think that the frequent allusions to the burial of the dead are thus explained. They are in the first place the result of an imitation of the style and contents of Genesis, in which the burial of the dead is so constant a factor of patriarchal piety and sensitiveness. They are, moreover, due to the author's conviction that charity to the dead is the type and acme of disinterested love, of disinterested love which, by the strange ways of Providence, does find its reward.

I. ABRAHAMS.

#### **Asher ben Saul and the Sefer Haminhagoth.**

HERR HALBERSTAM writes with reference to Mr. Schechter's article on the ספר המנהגות that he agrees with Mr. Schechter's identification of the author as R. Asher ben Saul, and not as Asher ben Meshullam, and that R. Jacob Nazir was the brother of the former, and not of the latter. Herr Halberstam adds that it is probable that R. Jacob ben Saul is also the R. Jacob Nazir who wrote a commentary to Job, quoted by Dr. Gross in Graetz's *Monatsschrift*, 1874, p. 173. Perhaps he is, indeed, one of the Fathers of Jewish Mysticism who taught it to the ראב"ן. The dates agree excellently, as R. Jacob was the elder brother of Asher, who always calls him אחי הגדול. So, p. 20 of JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, a passage of Asher is quoted which has a cabbalistic colour, and this he derived either from ראב"ן or from R. Jacob. Gross, *ibid.*, p. 175, wrote that