

Poetry 1

- Ecclesiastes
- Song of Songs
- Wisdom of Solomon
- Proverbs
- Psalms
- Job
- Wisdom of Sirach

Ecclesiastes

Objective:

- The Vanity of Life
- The Grief of Wisdom
- The Vanity of Pleasure
- Everything Has Its Time
- The Value of a Friend
- Wealth Is Not the Goal of Life

Resources:

- [Fr Tadros Y Malaty Commentary](#)
- [Catena Bible Commentary](#)
- [Fr Dawoud Lamie Bible study \(Arabic\)](#)

Reading:

- Ecclesiastes 1
- Ecclesiastes 2:1-11
- Ecclesiastes 3:1-11
- Ecclesiastes 4:9-12
- Ecclesiastes 6
- Ecclesiastes 12

Key verse(s):

“Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, “I have no pleasure in them”” Ecclesiastes 12:1

Comments:

- The name "Ecclesiastes" is derived from the Greek word *ekklesia* ("assembly") and means "one who addresses an assembly."
 - *ekklesia* also means 'Church'
- The author is Solomon as referenced in (1:1) at the end of his life
- The book stresses on one main concept: *All is vanity*
- Ecclesiastes completes Proverbs:
 - Proverbs: Focuses on how to behave and live wisely
 - Ecclesiastes: Talks about life from the endpoint

- Church Fathers consider this book as Solomon's repentance after the days he spent away from God
- The books help us to look forward to the heavens and not care too much for the earth
- Chapter 1:
 - V.3 Man's labor who is away from God and laboring in earthly things
 - V.4-6 Life continues and every generation goes without learning from the previous generation. We learn to do their good deeds and avoid their sins/mistakes
 - V.7 man is never full or satisfied
- Chapter 2:
 - Testing joy/pleasure
 - His ways of joy were not good
 - He walked in ungodly ways and still found no gain
 - He acquired many and all things in life, but never found a real gain
 - V.11 "grasping for the wind" means that whatever we try to get or hold on in life is like holding air and no real gain. That's why the Church always tells us to hold onto the Heavenly things because they are not 'air'
- Chapter 3:
 - Time
 - Everything has a certain time and it will end
 - Nothing on earth is everlasting - Heavens is eternal
 - It is wise to understand that when a person is happy, triumphant, sad, or down, he shall understand that these will not continue
 - V.11 Shows that God has timing for everything. For us, there's time for the beginnings, time for the ends, and things seem unclear sometimes. But for God, everything has a time, and he "Everything beautiful in its time". The way to understand all these things is to get out of the worldly timing and look at the heavens and eternal life. Things happen in our lives for eternal life - This should be the way of one's thinking process.
- Chapter 4:
 - The value of a Godly friend/companion
- Chapter 6:
 - This chapter can be summarized as: Wealth is not the goal of life
 - Money is important for supporting us to have the means of living and not committing certain sins (stealing, lying, etc.)
 - We are to work hard and study hard to get a degree for better jobs to support ourselves to be able to be sufficient, avoid falling into certain sins, sustain ourselves and our families, give to the poor, and glorify God in everything else we do. "Fill our hearts with joy and gladness, that we toom having sufficiency is everything always, may abound in every good deed" Liturgy of St. Basil
- Chapter 12:
 - V.1 Remember God when you have time, energy, and health, before the end of time comes when you can't give, don't have time, or no health to serve or go to church
 - V.2-5 show how people at old age see a decline in physical health and activities
 - V.5 Solomon understands that life is not the end. We are currently in our temporary tent as St. Paul mentioned in 2 Corinthians 5:1

- V.13-14 The conclusion of the book and Solomon's life. Also the conclusion for man's life on earth

Review/recap questions:

***Servant may add more questions*

1. How do generations compare to the earth cycle?
2. What did the preacher communed with his heart?
3. What great works did the preacher undertake?
4. Why are two better than one?
5. "Remember your Creator before the silver cord is loosed, or the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher shattered at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the well." Explain.
6. Vanity of vanities. The word vanity was repeated several times in this Book. Can you tell how many times and what is the essence of repeating it?

Homework:

***Servant may add more questions*

1. What is crooked cannot be made _____, and what is _____ cannot be numbered.
2. For in much _____ is much grief, and he who increases _____ increases sorrow.
3. What did the preacher make for himself?
a) gardens b) orchards c) water pools d) all of these
4. What does God give to the man who is good in His sight?
a) money b) kingdom c) wisdom d) knowledge
5. To everything there is a _____, a _____ for every purpose under _____.
6. "God shall _____ the righteous and the _____, for there is a time there for every _____ and for every _____."
7. Better a _____ and wise _____ than an old and foolish _____ who will be admonished no more
8. Better is the sight of the _____ than the wandering of _____. This also is vanity and grasping for the _____.

Song of Songs

Objective:

- The Banquet
- The Beloved's Request
- A Troubled Night
- The Coming of Solomon
- The Bridegroom Praises the Bride
- The Shulamite's Troubled Evening
- Praise of the Shulamite's Beauty
- Lovers Reunited at Their Country Home

Resources:

- [Fr Tadros Y Malaty Commentary](#)
- [Catena Bible Commentary](#)
- [Fr Dawoud Lamie Bible study \(Arabic\)](#)

Reading:

- Chapter 1: 1-15
- Chapter 2: 1-15
- Chapter 3: 1-5
- Chapter 4: 1:15
- Chapter 7: 1-9

Key verse(s):

“Like a lily among thorns, So is my love among the daughters” Song of Songs 2:2

Comments:

- The Song of Solomon is a love song abounding in metaphors and oriental imagery.
- It depicts the God's love towards His Church
- The Book is arranged like scenes in a drama with different speakers and the chorus
- In the Bible, God's love was allegorically depicted as a relationship between a bridegroom and his bride
 - OT: Isaiah – Jeremiah – Ezekiel – Hosea
 - NT: 2 Corinthians 11 – Ephesians 5 – Revelation – The Parable of Ten Virgins - The Parable of the Wedding Feast - St. John the Baptist

- This book was called "Song of Songs" to show that repeating the word "song" refers to its superiority over the other songs.
 - *This resembles the saying, "King of kings or Lord of lords, or holy of holies, or Sabbath of sabbaths, or Heaven of heavens or vanity of vanities."*
- The Jews understood this book symbolizes the relationship between God (the Bridegroom) and His people (the bride), until the coming of the Messiah.
- The Fathers understood this book represents the relationship between the Messiah the Savior and His Church the bride
- We notice that the bridegroom is always good, without any mistakes/sins, and a king. This is because it symbolizes our Lord.

Characters of the Book	
The Bridegroom	Our Lord Jesus Christ who betrothed the church a holy bride for Him
The Bride	Name: Shulamite The Universal Church, or the believer as a living member of the Church
The Virgins	The believers who have not yet attained the spiritual depth, but have achieved some progress on the road of salvation
The Daughters of Jerusalem	The Jewish nation, which should have preached the Messiah the Savior of the world
The Friends of the Bridegroom	The angels who attained the perfect man
The Young Sister	The humanity who need the Lord Jesus Christ to serve and care for her

- If the book is literal, this bride will never be a real human!



• Chapter 1:

- V.2: "Let him kiss me" The bride wants to return to God. Asking God to accept her
 - God's mouth always contains blessings and joyful words. His kisses are messages of love and hope
- V.3: "Therefore the virgins love you" The bride is happy that her friends and everyone around her go to God. The meaning will never be realistic if literal. No bride wants her friends to love her beloved!
- V.4: "Run after you" The works of salvation. God's grace accepted her, but she had to do the work.
 - "Rightly do they love you" she confesses that God's love is worth the love
- V.5: Dark because of sins. Lovely because God still loves us. He hates the sin.
- V.6: People and the busyness of life make us forget to watch our vineyard. We get busy with people and sometimes service, activities, etc. But we don't focus on our spiritual life.
- V.15: Shows how God looks at human souls.

• Chapter 2:

- V.2: The bridegroom is saying that his beloved is special among all people. This is how God look at the repentant soul as a lily among the thorns (world).
- V.6: Shows that God will embrace the repentant soul when returns to him
- V.15: The large foxes are noticeable and can be caught. The little foxes enter through the wall and eat the vines. They are overlooked until the foxes grow up from eating the vines. These are like little sins that we sometimes don't think it is a sin or a big deal and are never caught until they cause a bigger problem or death.

• Chapter 3: 1-5

- She walked out by night (middle of struggles, tribulations, and hardships) to look for God. She went to the city (world) to look for him, but he was not in the common places of the world where people always go. She found the watchmen (servants and

clergy) and they instructed her where to go. Note that the watchmen went and found her. Shortly after God's servants told her where to go to find him (Church) she successfully found him. She then brings all her friends and family back with her to Christ and instructs them to not (awaken Him) with their sins or unfaithfulness. This means: "We forgot and ended the past, let's not return to them."

- Chapter 4:

- Spouse and sister will never apply to a real physical marriage
 - Eyes: Dove-> simplicity
 - Hair: God's people sticking to the head (God)
 - Lips: Scarlet -> Eucharist
 - Neck: The tower of David was high -> can differentiate and see the enemy from afar.
 - 1000 is a heavenly infinity number
 - Breasts: 2-> OT and NT. Twins: Equal in importance and value. The Church feeds her people from the Bible
 - Fawns have sharp vision: After the Bible, we gain discernment
 - Friday Theotokia: He held to your breasts and you fed him. Breasts= mother aka feeding/giving
 - Teeth: Servants who eat and provide for service. Teeth grow and erupt when the person grows spiritual maturity.
 - Shorn sheep wool/fleece means no sin. Servants take off sins, bad habits, etc.
 - Nose: Tower of Lebanon -> She can recognize from afar the temptations of worldly pleasures
 - Temple: pomegranate-> red from shyness and shame of sin
 - Lips: Honey -> the praises of bride.
 - Honey is a product of hard-working bees. Servants' hardworking fruits
 - Feet: Feet of peace (Eph.6). She walks in the way of God's word, way of repentance
 - Curves=joints. The entire body of Christ is connected. The beauty of church is in her oneness.
 - Curves are strong and fast in her return to God.
 - Thighs: connect upper and lower halves -> Victorious churches and struggling churches
 - Naval: The umbilical cord is cut. Cut from the world-beginning of a new life (opposite in Ez.16)
 - Rounded = no beginning or end like all heavenly blessings. She became Heavenly

- Chapter 7:

- The bride returns once more to her beloved. After she returns, her beloved praises her again with similar descriptions.
- V.1: Shows her fast approach in returning to her beloved. The soul speeds back to God.

Review/recap questions:

***Servant may add more questions*

1. In this Book there was no literal mention of God so, why was it included in the Holy Bible?
What does this Book represent? What other Book in the Holy Bible did not mention a word about God?
2. "I am dark, but lovely" Explain
3. What do the foxes in verse 15 refer to?
4. Why call a spouse "my sister"?

Homework:

***Servant may add more questions*

1. Who made the Shulamite keeper of the vineyards?
a) the vinedresser b) the Lord c) her mother's sons d) her mother
2. What does the Shulamite have around her neck?
a) a scarf b) chains of gold c) a cross d) chains of silver
3. The Shulamite describes herself as:
a) a rose b) a lily c) both
4. My beloved is _____, and I am his. He feeds his flock among the _____

Wisdom of Solomon

Objective:

- The Incarnation of the Wisdom
- The Divinity of Christ
- Solomon's Prayer for Wisdom
- Wisdom with the Old Testament Saints

Resources:

- Fr Tadros Y Malaty Commentary
- Catena Bible Commentary
- Fr Dawoud Lamie Bible study (Arabic)
- SUS Might Arrows

Reading:

- Chapter 2: 1-25
- Chapter 7: 26-30
- Chapter 9: 1-18

Key verse(s):

“For God loves none but those who dwell with wisdom” Wisdom 7:28

Reading can be from OSB.

Comments:

- The Book is one of the Deuterocanonical Books
- It has been canonized in our Church and it is one of the Poetic Books
- Solomon is the author and it can be testified from the Book for these reasons:
 - The same eloquent and profound poetic style found in Solomon's other books
 - It is placed in the same order as Solomon's other books
 - Mentioned himself in (Wisdom 9:7-12)
- The Book is found in the Septuagint
- Many Church fathers affirmed the Book's canonicity like: St. Clement of Alexandria, St. Augustine, St. Athanasius, and St. Irenaeus.
- The Book talks about the Logos and His incarnation, His work of salvation, and His passion
- Breakdown:

- Chapters 1-9: Wisdom in life with people
- Chapter 10-19: Wisdom in humanity with God's people in the Old Testament
- Chapter 2:
 - V. 1 The ungodly say that there is no eternal life.
 - V.12-25: Talk about our Lord Jesus and how people viewed Him
 - V.13 Accurate prophecy on our Lord Jesus Christ
 - V.14 The Lord knew their thoughts like the incident of the Paralytic man
 - V.18: This was mentioned at the Crucifixion
 - V.19-20: Talk about the Crucifixion
 - V.25 "The Same as the Reconciliation prayer in the Liturgy of St. Basil"
 - Proves the canonicity of the Book
- Chapter 7:26-30
 - Talks about the Divinity of Christ
 - V.28: God will not accept someone unless he is attached to Christ
- Chapter 9:
 - V. 1: God the Father created all things through His Son
 - V. 4: Solomon is not asking for wisdom (trait), but the Wisdom of God. This is the Logos to live in Him
 - V.6: No one is good or perfect except if he has our Lord Jesus Christ
 - V.7-12: Talks about Solomon
 - V.8: He built the Temple according to the pattern of the Tabernacle which Moses built as God Himself showed him
 - V.9: A Theological explanation that the Wisdom - God the Son - the Logos was present from the beginning of time. The Divine Timelessness of God the Son.
 - V.10: God's incarnation
 - V.16: Shows our limitations as humans. We can't understand everything on earth, so by default, we can't understand the heavens!
- Chapters 10-19: Talks about how the wisdom carried the Old Testament saints. Encourage the youth to read at home

Review/recap questions:

***Servant may add more questions*

1. When did our Lord read the people's thoughts?
2. Show a verse that is mentioned in the Divine Liturgy.
3. Chapter 9: Show verses that mention God's Divinity

Homework:

***Servant may add more questions*

1. "For she is the breath of the of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the: therefore can no defiled thing fall into her." Wisdom 7:25
2. "And hardly do we guess aright at things that are upon, and with labour do we find the things that are before us: but the things that are in who hath searched out?" Wisdom 9:16

Proverbs

Objective:

- The Beginning of Knowledge
- The Value of Wisdom
- Guidance for the Young

Resources:

- Fr Tadros Y Malaty Commentary
- Catena Bible Commentary
- Fr Dawoud Lamie Bible study (Arabic)

Reading:

- Chapter 1: 1-7
- Chapter 2: 1-22
- Chapter 3: 1-35
- Chapter 5: 1-14
- Chapter 6: 6-11

Key verse(s):

“The fear of the Lord *is* the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One *is* understanding” Proverbs 9:10

Encourage the youth to read the rest of the Book.

One chapter a day = Finishing the Book in 1 month.

Activity along reading: Identify Synonyms and Antithetical Parallelism.

Comments:

- The Book is very easy to understand and digest
- The Book talks about the heavenly wisdom attained from above
- The Book always compares the wise vs folly decisions and the wise vs foolish
 - This helps understand the rewards vs consequences of decisions
- Wisdom in this book only means abiding by God - Not the intelligent and clever person

- Proverbs provides God's detailed instructions for His people to deal successfully with the practical affairs of everyday life: how to relate to God, parents, children, neighbors, and government
- Proverbs include oracles by the unknown figures named Agur the son of Jakeh (30:1) and King Lemuel (31:1).
- Hebrew Poetry and Proverbs are often written in two lines of equal length. This is called "Parallelism". There are two types of parallelism:
 - Type 1: **Synonymys parallelism**
 - Same thought in both lines
 - "Wisdom calls aloud outside; She raises her voice in the open squares"
Proverbs 1:20
 - Type 2: **Antithetic parallelism**
 - Contrast - Opposite thought
 - "The memory of the righteous is blessed, But the name of the wicked will rot"
Proverbs 10:7
- Chapter 1:
 - V.2: Wisdom = Godly wisdom attained from above not being clever or intelligent
 - V.7: Key verse of the book. Fearing God is the first sign of wisdom. When you fear Him, you walk in His ways, fear the second coming, fear and avoid sin, etc. This is wisdom!
- Chapter 2:
 - Value of Wisdom
 - V.1: It is important to "receive" the word. God's messages and signals surround us every day. It is important not just to hear it, but to receive it and do it
- Chapter 3:
 - Guidance for the Young
 - V.5: Many youth and young people rely on their understanding and don't have faith in God's ways which leads to a lack of patience.
 - V.7: Who imagines himself to be wise, relies on himself, and he who trusts in himself and his wisdom, this contradicts complete faith in God
 - V.9: God gave the blessing and the increase. Let us honor Him and His people who are in need.
- Chapter 5:
 - The consequences of Adultery
- Chapter 6:
 - The danger of laziness

Review/recap questions:

***Servant may add more questions*

1. How are we to gain the understanding of the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God?
2. Discuss and compare verse 6 with the Holy Book of St. James 1:5.
3. Does trusting God mean ignoring our own common sense?
4. What wisdom are we to draw from the ants?

Homework:

***Servant may add more questions*

1. What is the beginning of knowledge?
a) The obedience of our parents. b) The fear of the Lord. c) The reading of the Holy Bible.
d) The attendance of church.
2. "My son, hear the _____ your father, and do not _____ the _____ of your mother" _____.
3. According to Proverbs 2, the Lord gives:
a) treasures b) gold c) wisdom d) victory
4. "So you may walk in the way of _____, and keep to the paths of _____."
5. "My son, do not despise the _____ of the Lord, nor detest His _____; for whom the Lord _____ He _____, just as a father the son in whom he delights."
6. According to Proverbs 3, who are we to trust?
a) friends b) God c) our understanding d) knowledge
7. "For the ways of man are before the eyes of the _____, and He _____ all his paths."

Psalms

Objective:

- The Way of the Righteous and the End of the Ungodly
- The Lord Helps His Troubled People
- Man's Treachery and God's Constancy
- Praise for the Lord's Mercies
- The Lord the Defense of His People
- A Song of Praise to God Coming in Judgment
- God the Help of Those Who Seek Him
- The Heritage of the Righteous and the Calamity of the Wicked
- The Hope of the Faithful, and the Messiah's Victory

Resources:

- [Fr Tadros Y Malaty Commentary](#)
- [Catena Bible Commentary](#)
- [Fr Dawoud Lamie Bible study \(Arabic\)](#)

Reading:

- Psalm 1
- Psalm 3
- Psalm 12
- Psalm 16
- Psalm 37
- Psalm 96
- Psalm 103
- Psalm 121
- Psalm 124

Please read the Psalms in the order mentioned in the notes below.

Key verse(s):

"Delight yourself also in the Lord, and he shall give you the desires of your heart" Psalm 34:4

Encourage the youth to read and memorize as many Psalms as they can.

Comments:

- The book of Psalms is the largest and perhaps the most widely used book in the Bible
- The Church organized the Psalms to be prayed at certain hours that parallel them of that hour in Agpeya
- It contains prayer for the full range of human experiences in a very personal and practical way
- It is written over a lengthy period of Israel's history, the tremendous breadth of subject matter in the Psalms includes topics such as jubilation, war, peace, worship, judgment, messianic prophecy, praise, and lament
- The Psalms were set to the accompaniment of stringed instruments and served as the temple hymnbook and devotional guide for the Jewish people (refer to the title of each psalm in the Bible book)
- The Septuagint (Greek Old Testament) uses the Greek term Psalmoi as a title for this book, meaning poems sung to the accompaniment of musical instruments, and this word is the basis for the English terms "psalter" and "psalm".
- "Psalmody" Book of Psalms or Praises
- The Hebrew version has some words different from the Septuagint. That is the reason why we have different words in the Bible from the Agpeya
 - Agpeya and all church books: Use the Septuagint
 - Bible Books: Hebrew Version
- Psalters:
 - King David: 73 Psalms
 - Asaph: 12 Psalms
 - Sons of Korah: 11 Psalms
 - King Solomon: 2 Psalms (72 & 127)
 - Moses: 1 Psalm (90)
 - Heman the Ezrahite 1 Psalm
 - Ethan the Ezrahite 1 Psalm
 - The rest are called "Anonymous Psalms" because no author is mentioned or known
- H.H. Pope Shenouda III: *"Preserve the Psalms, the Psalms will preserve you."*
- Categories of Psalms:
 - **Individual Psalms:**
 - God's deliverance: Psalm 12
 - Lament Psalms: Psalm 3
 - V.5: Messianic prophecy
 - **Thanksgiving Psalms:** Praises God for His gracious acts and mercies toward us. These psalms make us aware of God's blessings and lead us to express our thanks with feeling.
 - Psalms 103 - 124
 - **Enthronement psalms:** God's sovereign rule. Through these psalms, we acknowledge God as a powerful Creator and sovereign Lord over all His creation.
 - Psalm 96
 - Kiahk Ode
 - **Psalms of Ascend:** Prayed by the Jews going to the 'uphill' of Jerusalem. Uphill -> Ascend. These are Psalms 120-134

- Psalm 121
- **Wisdom Psalms:** Instruct the worshiper in the way of wisdom and righteousness
 - Psalm 1
- **Messianic Psalms:** Prophecies on the coming Messiah
 - Psalm 16
 - V. 10
- Many Psalms are used in the Liturgical prayer and worship in our Coptic Orthodox Church
 - **Examples:**
 - A psalm is ready in almost any Liturgical service (Vespers, praises, Matins, Liturgy, Pascha, Crowning and Funeral services, etc.)
 - Psalm 118
 - Weekend Liturgy Procession of the Lamb
 - Psalm 24
 - Resurrection feast Enactment
 - Psalm 150
 - Liturgy Distribution of the Holy Eucharist
 - Psalm 50
 - Agpeya hours introduction
 - All Psalms are read during the making of the holy bread used for services (Orban)

Review/recap questions:

***Servant may add more questions*

1.

Homework:

***Servant may add more questions*

1.

Job

Objective:

- Job and His Family in Uz
- Satan Attacks Job's Character
- Satan Attacks Job's Health
- Job's Three Friends
- Job Deplores His Birth
- Job Defends Himself
- Elihu Contradicts Job's Friends
- The Lord Reveals His Omnipotence to Job
- Job's Response to God
- Job's Repentance and Restoration

Resources:

- [Fr Tadros Y Malaty Commentary](#)
- [Catena Bible Commentary](#)
- [Fr Dawoud Lamie Bible study \(Arabic\)](#)

Reading:

- Job 1:1-22
- Job 2:1-13
- Job 3:1-13
- Job 13: 1-5
- Job 32:1-22
- Job 38
- Job 40: 1-5
- Job 42:1-17

Key verse(s):

"Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord." Job 1:21



Comments:

- Job is thought by many scholars to have lived during the time of the Patriarchs (Abraham) or shortly before them. Most scholars agree that Job lived before the time of Exodus.
- Job is a story of a righteous man whom God allowed trials to come on him for his purification. The devil wanted to tempt Job but failed.
- Job suffered from "Self-righteousness". And the trials that the devil conducted (thinking he could break him), God used them for his salvation and edification.
- The Book of the Job is composed of many poems between the characters of the Book.
- Job is the author of the book. Many scholars think that Moses is the one who put the book/story in its poetic format to make it easy for memorization.
- Characters of the book:
 - God
 - Devil
 - Job
 - Job's wife
 - Job's friends
 - Eliphaz
 - Bildad
 - Zopher
 - Elihu
- Breakdown of the book:
 - Dilemma and conflict of Job: Ch. 1-3
 - Debates of Job and people around him: 3-37
 - Deliverance of Job: 38-42
- Ch.1
 - Job was a righteous and wealthy man.

- God is happy with his son Job who is faithful and righteous. The devil tells God that Job is living like that only because God blessed him with everything. The devil states that if all the blessings were taken from Job, he would not follow God anymore.
- God allows the devil to tempt Job without touching his soul.
- In one day, Job lost his livestock, servants, and ten children.
- Job thanks God and never loses faith
- He realized that he came empty and will leave the world empty (V.21)
- Ch.2
 - Job's health is affected
 - His three friends came to support him
 - They were silent for 7 days respecting the mournful circumstances he was going through
 - V.9-13
 - Job's wife accuses him of still being faithful to God, urging him to "curse God and die" after experiencing immense suffering, essentially telling him to give up on God and accept his fate by blaming God for his hardships.
 - Job calls her "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks". Losing faith in God and leaving him due to a trial is foolish!
- Ch.3
 - Out of weakness and the heavy pressure of trials, Job curses the day of his birth. However, he never deplored God!
- Ch.4-11: His three friends are giving reasons why he is suffering all of this
 - Eliphaz: Eliphaz was the first to speak and he argued that Job's suffering was a punishment for his sin. He claimed that the innocent do not suffer and that Job must have done something wrong to deserve such pain
 - This is false. God loves his children and only punishes them for their edifying their souls not to see them perish and suffer pain.
 - Bildad: He argued that Job's suffering was a result of his own wickedness or the wickedness of his children. He urged Job to repent and seek God's forgiveness.
 - This is false. He is speaking without truly understanding God's will, Job's character, or his spiritual life
 - Zophar: He was the most harsh of the three friends and accused Job of being arrogant and deceitful. He claimed that Job's suffering was actually less than he deserved and that Job should be grateful for God's mercy.
 - This is false. His argument was based on a belief in his own righteousness and a lack of compassion for Job's pain
- Ch. 13
 - Job defends himself. He mentioned that he is not less than them on knowledge or experience
 - He called them:
 - Forgers of Lies (13:4)
 - Worthless physicians (13:4)
 - They would be wise if they stayed silent! (13:5)
 - Miserable comforters (16:2)
 - Do we act like Job's friends when people around us need our help? or do we support them and remind them of God's love and mercy?!

- Ch. 32
 - Elihu the young in age (Job's fourth friend) enters the conversation
 - He did not agree with Job or the other three friends in analyzing the situation and trying to find an answer
 - He disagreed with Job because he "justified himself rather than God" (V.2)
 - He disagreed with his friends as they tried to make up a reason without knowing the truth or understanding God's will (V.3)
- Ch.38
 - God asks Job many questions. All of them can be answered with "no" or "I don't know"
 - This reveals that anytime we 'accuse' God, we are false about this accusation as we do not know the depth of His wisdom and foreknowledge.
- Ch. 40
 - Job realized that God's wisdom and knowledge is far from his understanding
- Ch. 42
 - Beautiful ending to the book
 - Job realized that all of what happened to him was God's plan to purify him
 - V.5: An important realization that Job reached. We all hear about God. We only see Him, know Him, and get closer to Him during trials. Hence, God allows them.
 - Job interceded for his friends and God forgave them
 - V.10-12: Everything that was taken was returned to Job. Everything was doubled except his children.
 - He did not lose them. They only departed to another place (The Heavens!)
 - All of what happened to Job, yet he still died "old and full of days."
 - Gives us hope that God is in control of everything and everyone (Pantocrator). He has a plan for everyone!

Review/recap questions:

***Servant may add more questions*

1. Who are the sons of God?
2. What was Job's response to the test and what do we learn from it?
3. What do you think of Job's response to his wife?
4. What do you learn about Satan from chapters 1 and 2?
5. In his sorrow did Job consider suicide? Give proof.
6. How had God lodged in Job?
7. Having heard God, what does Job now admit?
8. Briefly tell how Job's friends had misrepresented God.

Homework:

***Servant may add more questions*

1. Job had _____ sons.
a) seven b) five c) three
2. Job possessed:
a) 7000 sheep b) 3000 camels c) 500 yoke of oxen d) all of these

3. *Job's wife wanted him to:*
 - a) *worship God* b) *curse God* c) *fast*
4. *Give the names of Job's three friends.*
5. *What did Job curse?*
 - a) *the day he was born* b) *his friends* c) *his luck*
6. *Who said, "Why did I not die at birth?"*
 - a) *Satan* b) *Leviathan* c) *Job*
7. *What did Job do for his friends?*
 - a) *give them money* b) *reproach them* c) *pray for them*
8. *Job had _____ sons and _____ daughters.*

Wisdom of Sirach

Objective:

- Faith in God
- Honoring your father and mother

Resources:

- Fr Tadros Y Malaty Commentary
- Catena Bible Commentary
- Fr Dawoud Lamie Bible study (Arabic)

Reading:

- Sirach 2: 1-11
- Sirach 3: 1-34
- Sirach 4: 1-11
- Sirach 6: 1-17
- Sirach 24: 1-17
- Sirach 38: 1-15
- Sirach 51: *To be prayed at the end as a group prayer*

Key verse(s):

“You that fear the Lord, believe him; and your reward shall not fail” Sirach 1:8

Comments:

- Also known as Joshua the Son of Sirach
- The last of the Wisdom Books
- It is the longest of the Wisdom Books
- We read multiple chapters/paragraphs during the Great Lent in our Coptic Lectionary
- Sirach was written close to the Nativity of our Lord
- It was originally written in Hebrew and then translated into Greek
- The Book contains plenty of virtues and practical and reflective wisdom
- Sirach 51 is a thanksgiving prayer by Joshua
- Ch.2

- V.1: When we grow spiritually, the devil will increase the wars as long as we are getting closer to Christ as he wants us to fail
 - This is opposite to the people who think that being close to God will prevent temptations from them
- V.5: As gold gets more purified when tried in fire, the man also increases spiritually and gets purified more when he resists the devil
- V.11: God took care of the people before us and took care of us before in our lives, He will not stop!
- Ch.3
 - Ch. 2 talks about how to honor your father and mother
 - This chapter expands on the commandment that God gave Moses
 - V.1: The spiritually wise people come together to form the Church
 - V.19-34: Talks about the difference between a pure heart and an unwise heart
- Ch. 4
 - V.1-11: The importance of giving donations and supporting those who are in need
 - This has to be done with wisdom lest we give money to people who use it in bad/wrong means
 - V.11: If you support the poor, you become a child of God
- Ch.6
 - The importance of a Godly friend
 - V.17: Fearing god = Choosing friends who fear God too = Healthy friendships
- Ch. 24
 - The Fathers understand this chapter to be a reference to Christ
 - V.5: Begotten from the Father before all ages
 - V.7: He is a heavenly God
 - V.13: He incarnated as a seed of Jacob
 - V.14: He is an Etenral God
 - V.17: He was exalted on the Cross in front of multitudes
- Ch. 38
 - Medicine and medications are from God
 - V.2: God has blessed us with medicine and medications
 - V.3: The knowledge of a doctor is a talent that God gave to use for the glory of His name
 - V.4: Taking medications is not against the faith. We understand that God blessed us with these. The herbs are created by God that cause the cure
 - V.9: Being sick should encourage the person to pray more, not an excuse to not pray
 - V.9-12: shows the correct order. You pray and repent first, and then rely on medicine
 - V.14: A message to the doctor. Don't forget God's hand and always pray for the patients
 - V.15: Sometimes God uses the disease for people to pray and repent (e.g. Covid 19)
- Ch. 51: To be prayed at the end as a group prayer.

Review/recap questions:

***Servant may add more questions*

1.

Homework:

***Servant may add more questions*