

# 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, n 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

- o 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 \_\_\_\_\_.

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