

## REL 1310 – Christian Scriptures

Hello and welcome to the weekly resources for REL-1310!

These resources are structured a bit differently from other online study guides on the Baylor Tutoring website because the content in these courses are organized largely around biblical histories and narratives. Please take a look at other weekly resources listed on our website for additional topics from Christian Scriptures throughout the semester. Your professor might be discussing these topics in a different order than presented here.

We also invite you to take a look at the group tutoring chart on our website to see if this course has a group tutoring session offered this semester.

If you have any questions about these study guides, group tutoring sessions, private 30-minute tutoring appointments, the Baylor Tutoring YouTube channel or any tutoring services we offer, please visit our website [www.baylor.edu/tutoring](http://www.baylor.edu/tutoring) or call our drop-in center during open business hours, M-Th 9am-8pm on class days, at 254-710-4135.

## Wisdom Literature

### Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes

#### Job

- Main theme: **Asking life's difficult questions** (what is righteousness and why do people suffer?)
- Chapters 1-2
  - o Job is a very righteous man who loves the Lord. He had a large family and a lot of belongings.
  - o Satan (Hebrew for 'the accuser') told the Lord that if he lost his things, he would not love the Lord anymore.
  - o The Lord allowed Satan to test Job by having natural forces destroy his belongings and having people kill his children.
  - o Job mourned for his family but he still praised the Lord.
  - o Satan then made Job sick. This made Job miserable.
  - o Job's wife told him that he should curse God and die.
  - o Job's 3 friends (Eliphaz, Bildad, & Zophar) arrive.
- Chapters 3-4
  - o Job cursed the day he was born.
  - o Eliphaz accused Job of not fearing God.
- Chapters 5-37
  - o Job's friends blame him and say that he had to have sinned in some way to cause his suffering.
- Chapters 38-41
  - o After the friends have discussions for most of the book, the Lord speaks to Job.
  - o The conversation has a courtroom feel and the Lord tells Job about his wisdom, power, and justice.

- The Lord tells Job that He is the one who created the universe and knows everything about it while Job does not.
- Job responds to the Lord initially with silence.
- Chapter 42
  - Job responds and admits he does not have the ability to understand the things that the Lord understands.
  - The Lord says that Job spoke correctly about His nature while his 3 friends did not.
  - The Lord restores Job's health and belongings and blesses him with a larger family.

## Psalms

- Made up of 5 books of poems.
- The Psalms express Israel speaking to God: praise, anger, and a wide range of other emotions.
- Stages of developing faith: 1) trust for God like what one has in a parent, 2) personal reflection, 3) acceptance of the lack of human knowledge and the necessity of faith.
- 'Hallelujah': Hebrew for 'praise the Lord'.
  
- Books 1-3
  - Contrasts righteousness with wickedness.
  - Encourages the reader to choose righteousness.
  - Psalm 2: introduces **David's** family as the rulers that God has appointed.
  - Some are cries for help (laments).
  - The Lord is seen as a place of refuge and hope.
  - Psalms 42-83 refer to 'God,' while the rest refer to 'the Lord.'
  - Book 3 addresses the fall of Jerusalem.
- Books 4-5
  - Book 4 begins with a prayer of **Moses** to remind us of the time before Israel became a kingdom (Psalm 90).
  - These books emphasize praise of the Lord.

## Proverbs

- Definition of proverb: a short teaching about life.
- Example of a modern proverb: "The apple doesn't fall far from the tree."
- The proverbs do not intend to be answers to all of life's questions. Instead, they act as general guides for what happens in life.
- Outline:
  - Proverbs 1-9
    - Calls the readers to listen to wisdom.
    - Wisdom is personified as a woman.
    - Foolishness is personified as a prostitute who leads to death and destruction.
  - Proverbs 10-22

- Proverbs of **Solomon**
- Proverbs 22-24
  - Sayings of the wise
- Proverbs 25-29
  - More proverbs of **Solomon**
- Proverbs 30
  - Sayings of Agur
- Proverbs 31
  - Sayings of Lemuel
  - Description of a wise woman

### Ecclesiastes

- Tradition considers **Solomon** to be the author of Ecclesiastes.
- Chapter 1 verse 1 says the book is written by the preacher who is the son of **David**.
- The book talks about how sometimes the wisdom from Proverbs does not address all the confusing times of life.
- The author says that everything seems 'vain' (pointless) and things like work are just like chasing after the wind – we will never catch the actual meaning.
- There is another emphasis on the human inability to know the future.
- The author decides in the end that the best option we have is trusting and fearing God and his teaching.

## **Test your knowledge!**

Answers are at the bottom of the document.

- 1) Which king of Israel is the book of Ecclesiastes traditionally understood to be written by?
  - a. Saul
  - b. David
  - c. Soloman
  - d. Rehoboam
- 2) What is the main overarching theme of Job?
  - a. Bad things always happen to good people.
  - b. Because we are not God, we will not always understand everything.
  - c. Someone's sin must be responsible for everything bad that happens.
  - d. We should always assume that our friends are right about our problems.
- 3) What is 'hallelujah' Hebrew for?
  - a. Praise the Lord
  - b. Good day
  - c. Peace
  - d. God be with you
- 4) Which wisdom literature book is made up of 5 smaller books?
  - a. Job
  - b. Psalms
  - c. Proverbs
  - d. Ecclesiastes
- 5) What did Job's wife tell him to do while he was suffering?
  - a. Praise God and live
  - b. Kick rocks
  - c. Curse God and die
  - d. Use the scapegoat from the book of Numbers.

Answers: 1) c. 2) b. 3) a. 4) b. 5) c.