

1. Why is a good name vital in a Christian's life? Why does the Koheleth say that the day of one's death is better than the day one's birth? (vv. 1; Matt. 5:13-16)
2. Why is sorrow and mourning better than feasting, laughter and pleasure? What effect does a house of mourning have on those that are still living? (vv. 2-4; 2:14-16; 3:19-20; 6:6)
3. Why is it important to listen to those who are wise? How does the Koheleth illustrate the laughter and pleasure that a fool enjoys? What does this say about the fool? (vv. 5-6; 2:2; 4:13; Prov 13:1; 17:10)
4. What destroys a wise man's reason (into madness)? What corrupts his heart? (vv. 7; 4:1-3)
5. How can patience keep us from behaving foolishly? (vs. 8-10; Prov 14:17, 29; 16:32; 19:11; James 1:19-21)
6. What two things does man use as a shelter (or defense)? Which of these two is better for man? Why? (vv. 11-12)
7. How should we regard the work of God? What should we do in days of prosperity? In days of adversity? Why? (vv. 13-14; Mt 8:20; Lk 10:38; Rom 8:28; 2Co 1:4-7; Phil 4:4-13)

Notes & Answers

(1) Why is a good name vital in a Christian's life? Why does the Koheleth say that the day of one's death is better than the day one's birth? (vv. 1; Matt. 5:13-16)

Ecclesiastes 7:1 (ESV)

¹ A good name is better than precious ointment,
and the day of death than the day of birth.

Matthew 5:13–16 (ESV)

¹³ “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.

¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

First of all, the Teacher says that a good and well-deserved reputation is better than a mask of perfumed cosmetics. Preserve your good name until the day of your death and you achieve the potentiality of your birth inheritance¹

*He suggested that it is **better** to come to the end of life with a good reputation (**good name**) than to have a joyful and auspicious beginning which, because of folly, might result in nothing.²*

Just as Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, our reputation and influence mean everything in being able to win souls for the Kingdom of God.

¹ Wright, J. S. (1991). [Ecclesiastes](#). In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Vol. 5, p. 1174). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

² Glenn, D. R. (1985). [Ecclesiastes](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 992). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

(2) Why is sorrow and mourning better than feasting, laughter and pleasure? What effect does a house of mourning have on those that are still living?

(vv. 2-4; 2:14-16; 3:19-20; 6:6)

Ecclesiastes 7:2-4 (ESV)

² It is better to go to the house of mourning
than to go to the house of feasting,
for this is the end of all mankind,
and the living will lay it to heart.

³ Sorrow is better than laughter,
for by sadness of face the heart is made glad.

⁴ The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning,
but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

Helps us to understand the brevity of life. We have to make the most of the time that we have. Focusing on our mortality will better prepare us for this than revelry.

Ecclesiastes 2:14-16 (ESV)

¹⁴ The wise person has his eyes in his head, but the fool walks in darkness. And yet I perceived that the same event happens to all of them. ¹⁵ Then I said in my heart, “What happens to the fool will happen to me also. Why then have I been so very wise?” And I said in my heart that this also is vanity. ¹⁶ For of the wise as of the fool there is no enduring remembrance, seeing that in the days to come all will have been long forgotten. How the wise dies just like the fool!

Ecclesiastes 3:19-20 (ESV)

¹⁹ For what happens to the children of man and what happens to the beasts is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts, for all is vanity. ²⁰ All go to one place. All are from the dust, and to dust all return.

Ecclesiastes 6:6 (ESV)

⁶ Even though he should live a thousand years twice over, yet enjoy no good—do not all go to the one place?

Illustration: *“If We Were Vampires” – Song emphasizes that the brevity of his time with his wife makes him take their relationship more seriously. If they were vampires and lived forever, he might not even hold her hand.*

(3) Why is it important to listen to those who are wise? How does the Koheleth illustrate the laughter and pleasure that a fool enjoys? What does this say about the fool? (vv. 5-6; 2:2; 4:13; Prov 13:1; 17:10)

Ecclesiastes 7:5–6 (ESV)

⁵ It is better for a man to hear the rebuke of the wise
than to hear the song of fools.

⁶ For as the crackling of thorns under a pot,
so is the laughter of the fools;
this also is vanity.

If we are in earnest about God's good plan (cf. 6:10–12), we must be ready for serious conversation with men and women who are experienced in life and be open to criticism from them.³ Just as thorns burn quickly and provide little heat, foolish laughter is short-lived and accomplishes little.⁴

Ecclesiastes 2:2 (ESV)

² I said of laughter, "It is mad," and of pleasure, "What use is it?"

Ecclesiastes 4:13 (ESV)

¹³ Better was a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king who no longer knew how to take advice.

Proverbs 13:1 (ESV)

¹ A wise son hears his father's instruction,
but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

Proverbs 17:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ A rebuke goes deeper into a man of understanding
than a hundred blows into a fool.

³ Wright, J. S. (1991). [Ecclesiastes](#). In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Vol. 5, p. 1174). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

⁴ Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Ec 7:6). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

**(4) What destroys a wise man's reason (into madness)? What corrupts his heart?
(vv. 7; 4:1-3)**

Ecclesiastes 7:7 (ESV)

⁷ Surely oppression drives the wise into madness,
and a bribe corrupts the heart.

If you hold an influential position, do not use it for personal advantage. In particular, a bribe erodes character, making it susceptible to other forms of corruption. Thus a reputation can be destroyed in a moment.⁵

Ecclesiastes 4:1–3 (ESV)

¹ Again I saw all the oppressions that are done under the sun. And behold, the tears of the oppressed, and they had no one to comfort them! On the side of their oppressors there was power, and there was no one to comfort them. ² And I thought the dead who are already dead more fortunate than the living who are still alive. ³ But better than both is he who has not yet been and has not seen the evil deeds that are done under the sun.

**(5) How can patience keep us from behaving foolishly?
(vs. 8-10; Prov 14:17, 29; 16:32; 19:11; James 1:19-21)**

Ecclesiastes 7:8–10 (ESV)

⁸ Better is the end of a thing than its beginning,
and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.
⁹ Be not quick in your spirit to become angry,
for anger lodges in the heart of fools.
¹⁰ Say not, “Why were the former days better than these?”
For it is not from wisdom that you ask this.

The thought of v. 1 is ... amplified. Patience is needed to see our resolutions and enterprises through to the end. How often we embark on something with pride in our ability to carry it through but abandon it because of a few discouragements (v. 8)! Then we may become angry and hit out at other people as an excuse for our own incompetence (v. 9).⁶

⁵ Wright, J. S. (1991). [Ecclesiastes](#). In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Vol. 5, p. 1174). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

⁶ Wright, J. S. (1991). [Ecclesiastes](#). In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Vol. 5, p. 1174). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

Proverbs 14:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ A man of quick temper acts foolishly,
and a man of evil devices is hated.

Proverbs 14:29 (ESV)

²⁹ Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding,
but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly.

Proverbs 16:32 (ESV)

³² Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty,
and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

Proverbs 19:11 (ESV)

¹¹ Good sense makes one slow to anger,
and it is his glory to overlook an offense.

James 1:19–21 (ESV)

¹⁹ Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰ for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. ²¹ Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

(6) What two things does man use as a shelter (or defense)? Which of these two is better for man? Why? (vv. 11-12)

Ecclesiastes 7:11–12 (ESV)

¹¹ Wisdom is good with an inheritance,
an advantage to those who see the sun.

¹² For the protection of wisdom is like the protection of money,
and the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom preserves the life of him who has it.
Many suppose that sudden wealth, which would relieve them of having to earn their living, would solve all problems. If money comes like this, e.g., by inheritance, one needs wisdom to use it properly (v. 11). The security that wisdom gives can be compared with the security associated with money; in fact, wisdom is a better guarantee of the good life (v. 12).⁷

⁷ Wright, J. S. (1991). [Ecclesiastes](#). In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Vol. 5, p. 1174). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

(7) How should we regard the work of God? What should we do in days of prosperity? In days of adversity? Why? (vv. 13-14; Mt 8:20; Lk 10:38; Rom 8:28; 2Co 1:4-7; Phil 4:4-13)

Ecclesiastes 7:13–14 (ESV)

¹³ Consider the work of God:

who can make straight what he has made crooked?

¹⁴ In the day of prosperity be joyful, and in the day of adversity consider: God has made the one as well as the other, so that man may not find out anything that will be after him.

Echoes the earlier proclamation that God makes everything “beautiful,” “good,” or “appropriate” in its time (see 3:11 and note). People cannot change God’s order, regardless of the circumstances (3:14).⁸

It is easy to blame God when things go wrong and to forget to thank him when good things come (v. 14). As children of God, we commonly experience both good and bad and may even thank God for allowing hardships rather than giving us an entirely smooth passage (cf. Matt 8:20; Luke 10:38; 2 Cor 1:4–7). Part of the life of faith is accepting prosperity and adversity from God’s hand without being able to explain just how everything will be worked out for the future (v. 14; Rom 8:28).⁹

Matthew 8:20 (ESV)

²⁰ And Jesus said to him, “**Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.**”

Luke 10:38 (ESV)

³⁸ Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house.

Romans 8:28 (ESV)

²⁸ And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

⁸ Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Ec 7:13). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

⁹ Wright, J. S. (1991). [Ecclesiastes](#). In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Vol. 5, p. 1175). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

2 Corinthians 1:4–7 (ESV)

⁴ who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. ⁵ For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. ⁶ If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer. ⁷ Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort.

Philippians 4:4–13 (ESV)

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. ⁵ Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶ do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹ What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

¹⁰ I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. ¹¹ Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. ¹² I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. ¹³ I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

(8) What two things had the Koheleth seen in the days of his vanity? (v. 15)

Ecclesiastes 7:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ In my vain life I have seen everything. There is a righteous man who perishes in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man who prolongs his life in his evildoing.

Life under the sun does not fit into an equation

**(9) Against what does the Koheleth caution? How do we avoid this problem?
(vv. 16-18; Matt 5:20; 23:1–36; Phil 3:4-9)**

Ecclesiastes 7:16–18 (ESV)

¹⁶ Be not overly righteous, and do not make yourself too wise. Why should you destroy yourself? ¹⁷ Be not overly wicked, neither be a fool. Why should you die before your time? ¹⁸ It is good that you should take hold of this, and from that withhold not your hand, for the one who fears God shall come out from both of them.

By balancing the thoughts of verses 16 & 17, we have the advice to not model ourselves after either the self-righteous (like the Pharisees) or the worldly. Our aim should be to fear God and avoid the self-righteous and the worldly views.

Matthew 5:20 (ESV)

²⁰ For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 23:1–36 (ESV)

¹ Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, ² “The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat, ³ so do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do. For they preach, but do not practice. ⁴ They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to move them with their finger. ⁵ They do all their deeds to be seen by others. For they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long, ⁶ and they love the place of honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues ⁷ and greetings in the marketplaces and being called rabbi by others. ⁸ But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brothers. ⁹ And call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven. ¹⁰ Neither be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Christ. ¹¹ The greatest among you shall be your servant. ¹² Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

¹³ “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people’s faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in. ¹⁵ Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.

¹⁶ “Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘If anyone swears by the temple, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.’ ¹⁷ You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred? ¹⁸ And you say, ‘If anyone swears by the altar, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gift that is on the altar, he is

bound by his oath.’¹⁹ You blind men! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred?²⁰ So whoever swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it.²¹ And whoever swears by the temple swears by it and by him who dwells in it.²² And whoever swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by him who sits upon it.

²³ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.²⁴ You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!

²⁵ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence.²⁶ You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean.

²⁷ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people’s bones and all uncleanness.²⁸ So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

²⁹ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the monuments of the righteous,³⁰ saying, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’³¹ Thus you witness against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.³² Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers.³³ You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell?³⁴ Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town,³⁵ so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar.³⁶ Truly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

Philippians 3:4–9 (ESV)

⁴ though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. ⁷ But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—

(10) How strong is wisdom? (v. 19)

Ecclesiastes 7:19 (ESV)

¹⁹ Wisdom gives strength to the wise man more than ten rulers who are in a city.

**(11) What is the danger in paying attention to what others say about us?
(vv. 20-22; Prov 20:9; Job 4:17)**

Ecclesiastes 7:20–22 (ESV)

²⁰ Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins.

²¹ Do not take to heart all the things that people say, lest you hear your servant cursing you.

²² Your heart knows that many times you yourself have cursed others.

*... Life has to be lived with the awareness that there is no such thing as sinless perfection (v. 20).
... The godly person should be genuine and sincere. He should not listen to gossip, especially if he
is <expecting> to hear himself criticized or cursed especially by those who can observe him
closely, such as his servant. An old saying is that “no man is a hero to his valet” (cf. v. 21). The
criticism may not be deserved, but again it may be. At any rate, it is a reminder that at some
time everyone has been guilty of critical gossip (v. 22).¹⁰*

Proverbs 20:9 (ESV)

⁹ Who can say, “I have made my heart pure;
I am clean from my sin”?

Job 4:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ ‘Can mortal man be in the right before God?
Can a man be pure before his Maker?’

¹⁰ Wright, J. S. (1991). [Ecclesiastes](#). In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Vol. 5, p. 1176). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

(12) In his effort to be wise, what did the Koheleth find? (vv. 23-25; 1:16)

Ecclesiastes 7:23–25 (ESV)

²³ All this I have tested by wisdom. I said, “I will be wise,” but it was far from me. ²⁴ That which has been is far off, and deep, very deep; who can find it out?

²⁵ I turned my heart to know and to search out and to seek wisdom and the scheme of things, and to know the wickedness of folly and the foolishness that is madness.

These next few verses all deal with how exceedingly rare it is to find someone with true wisdom.

Ecclesiastes 1:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ I said in my heart, “I have acquired great wisdom, surpassing all who were over Jerusalem before me, and my heart has had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.”

**(13) What did he find more bitter than death? Who can escape such a woman?
(v. 26; 9:9; 1 Kings 11:3–4; Proverbs 31)**

Ecclesiastes 7:26 (ESV)

²⁶ And I find something more bitter than death: the woman whose heart is snares and nets, and whose hands are fetters. He who pleases God escapes her, but the sinner is taken by her.

Surely Solomon’s own experience with 700 wives and concubines led to the word picture of this woman who is a snare. Only through the power of God can we escape the snares of the devil.

Ecclesiastes 9:9 (ESV)

⁹ Enjoy life with the wife whom you love, all the days of your vain life that he has given you under the sun, because that is your portion in life and in your toil at which you toil under the sun.

1 Kings 11:3–4 (ESV)

³ He had 700 wives, who were princesses, and 300 concubines. And his wives turned away his heart. ⁴ For when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not wholly true to the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.

Proverbs 31 (ESV)

¹ The words of King Lemuel. An oracle that his mother taught him:

² What are you doing, my son? What are you doing, son of my womb?
What are you doing, son of my vows?

- ³ Do not give your strength to women,
your ways to those who destroy kings.
- ⁴ It is not for kings, O Lemuel,
it is not for kings to drink wine,
or for rulers to take strong drink,
- ⁵ lest they drink and forget what has been decreed
and pervert the rights of all the afflicted.
- ⁶ Give strong drink to the one who is perishing,
and wine to those in bitter distress;
- ⁷ let them drink and forget their poverty
and remember their misery no more.
- ⁸ Open your mouth for the mute,
for the rights of all who are destitute.
- ⁹ Open your mouth, judge righteously,
defend the rights of the poor and needy.
- ¹⁰ An excellent wife who can find?
She is far more precious than jewels.
- ¹¹ The heart of her husband trusts in her,
and he will have no lack of gain.
- ¹² She does him good, and not harm,
all the days of her life.
- ¹³ She seeks wool and flax,
and works with willing hands.
- ¹⁴ She is like the ships of the merchant;
she brings her food from afar.
- ¹⁵ She rises while it is yet night
and provides food for her household
and portions for her maidens.
- ¹⁶ She considers a field and buys it;
with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard.
- ¹⁷ She dresses herself with strength
and makes her arms strong.
- ¹⁸ She perceives that her merchandise is profitable.
Her lamp does not go out at night.
- ¹⁹ She puts her hands to the distaff,
and her hands hold the spindle.
- ²⁰ She opens her hand to the poor
and reaches out her hands to the needy.

- ²¹ She is not afraid of snow for her household,
for all her household are clothed in scarlet.
- ²² She makes bed coverings for herself;
her clothing is fine linen and purple.
- ²³ Her husband is known in the gates
when he sits among the elders of the land.
- ²⁴ She makes linen garments and sells them;
she delivers sashes to the merchant.
- ²⁵ Strength and dignity are her clothing,
and she laughs at the time to come.
- ²⁶ She opens her mouth with wisdom,
and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.
- ²⁷ She looks well to the ways of her household
and does not eat the bread of idleness.
- ²⁸ Her children rise up and call her blessed;
her husband also, and he praises her:
- ²⁹ “Many women have done excellently,
but you surpass them all.”
- ³⁰ Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain,
but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.
- ³¹ Give her of the fruit of her hands,
and let her works praise her in the gates.

(14) In his search, what had the Koheleth found, and not found? What is the significance of these numbers? (vv. 27-28)

Ecclesiastes 7:27–28 (ESV)

²⁷ Behold, this is what I found, says the Preacher, while adding one thing to another to find the scheme of things— ²⁸ which my soul has sought repeatedly, but I have not found. One man among a thousand I found, but a woman among all these I have not found.

This can be difficult to interpret, but again I think this is twisted by Solomon’s own experiences with 700 wives and 300 concubines. Some have suggested that Solomon is counting himself as the “one man.” Others will say that this is a messianic prophecy.

(15) What else had he found? (v. 29)

Ecclesiastes 7:29 (ESV)

²⁹ See, this alone I found, that God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes.

Probably a reference to the first chapters of Genesis (see 3:11 and 3:20). God created humanity “good,” but Adam and Eve sinned by seeking their own wisdom apart from God (Gen 3:5).¹¹

¹¹ Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Ec 7:29). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.