

Ecclesiastes 2:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees:

Analysis

I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees—the Hebrew 'berechot mayim' (בְּרִיכוֹת מַיִם, pools of water) describes artificial reservoirs or cisterns. Ancient engineering expertise was required to construct water management systems supporting large-scale agriculture and ornamental gardens. The phrase 'wood that bringeth forth trees' (ya'ar tsomeach etsim, יַעַר צֹמַח עֵצִים) literally means 'forest sprouting trees,' suggesting Solomon cultivated extensive tree nurseries requiring irrigation.

This verse illustrates the comprehensive scope of Solomon's projects. He didn't merely plant gardens but engineered entire infrastructure systems to sustain them—a significant investment of resources, labor, and planning. Archaeological evidence confirms ancient Israel's sophisticated water management, including the Pool of Siloam and various cisterns. Yet even technological mastery and agricultural abundance proved unable to satisfy the human soul. Jesus later revealed Himself as the source of 'living water' that truly satisfies (John 4:13-14; 7:37-38)—unlike Solomon's pools, which merely sustained temporal vegetation.

Historical Context

Water scarcity in the arid Mediterranean climate made irrigation systems essential for agriculture. Solomon's reign coincided with relative peace and prosperity (1 Kings 4:20-25), enabling ambitious construction projects. The Pools of Solomon near Bethlehem, traditionally associated with these reservoirs, still exist—three

massive pools supplying water to Jerusalem through aqueducts. First Kings 9:15-19 describes Solomon's extensive building program, including storage cities and infrastructure projects. Proverbs 21:1 uses irrigation imagery metaphorically: 'The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water.' Yet Ecclesiastes reveals that even successful mastery of natural resources through engineering excellence cannot fill the spiritual void only God can satisfy.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What systems, resources, or infrastructure have you built hoping to create security or satisfaction, and how do they compare to spiritual resources?
2. How does this verse challenge modern reliance on technology and human ingenuity to solve life's deepest problems?

Interlinear Text

יָעַשׂ יְתִי		לִי		בְּרִיכּוֹת		וְיָם		לְהַשְׁקֵךְ		וְיָם		וְיָם
I made	H0	me	pools	of water	to water	H1992	therewith	the wood				
H6213		H1295		H4325	H8248		H3293					
וְיָם		וְיָם:										
that bringeth forth		trees										
H6779		H6086										

Additional Cross-References

Nehemiah 2:14 (Parallel theme): Then I went on to the gate of the fountain, and to the king's pool: but there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass.

