

Ecclesiastes 7:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?

Analysis

That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out? (רחוק מה־שְׁהַיָּה וְאִמּוֹק אִמּוֹק מִי יִמְצָאֶנּוּ, rachok mah-shehayah ve'amoq amoq mi yimtsa'ennu)—literally 'far off is that which has been, and deep, deep—who can find it?' The doubled amoq amoq (deep, deep) intensifies the metaphor of inaccessible profundity. The rhetorical question mi yimtsa'ennu (who can find it?) expects the answer: no one.

This verse continues verse 23's epistemological humility, employing spatial metaphors for wisdom's inaccessibility: rachok (distant/far off) and amoq (deep). The duplication of 'deep' emphasizes fathomless mystery—truth lies beyond both horizontal reach and vertical depth. Job expressed identical frustration: 'Can you find out the deep things of God? Can you find out the limit of the Almighty? It is higher than heaven—what can you do? Deeper than Sheol—what can you know?' (Job 11:7-8). Paul later celebrated what human wisdom couldn't find: 'The Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God' (1 Corinthians 2:10). What remains 'far off and exceeding deep' to natural reason, God reveals through His Spirit.

Historical Context

Ancient wisdom traditions across cultures (Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Greek) acknowledged ultimate mysteries beyond human comprehension. Biblical wisdom uniquely pointed beyond human limitation toward divine revelation as the solution.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How should recognition of wisdom's 'far off and exceeding deep' nature shape your approach to complex questions?
2. In what areas might you be presuming comprehension that exceeds human capacity?
3. How does dependence on God's revelation through Scripture and Spirit address the 'deep' things human wisdom cannot reach?

Interlinear Text

כַּח וּקַ	מֵהַ	שְׁהִי הַ	עֲמִי קַ	עֲמִי קַ	מִי י
That which is far off	H4100	H1961	and exceeding deep	and exceeding deep	H4310
H7350			H6013	H6013	
מִי יִצְאֶנָּה:					
who can find it out					
H4672					

Additional Cross-References

Romans 11:33 (Parallel theme): O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

1 Timothy 6:16 (Parallel theme): Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

Psalms 139:6 (Parallel theme): Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.

Job 28:28 (Parallel theme): And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

Psalms 36:6 (Parallel theme): Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast.