

# Ecclesiastes 7:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness:

## Analysis

**I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom** (סבבתי וחקמתי ופשטתי, sabboti ani velibbi lada'at velatur uvaqesh chokhmah vecheshbon)—three verbs intensify the search: lada'at (to know), latur (to explore/investigate), uvaqesh (to seek). The term cheshbon means 'reckoning' or 'reason.' **And to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness** (והפסכלות הוללות, velada'at resha kesel vehasiklut holelot)—recognizing evil (resha), folly (kesel), foolishness (siklut), and madness (holelot).

Despite wisdom's elusiveness (verses 23-24), Qoheleth persisted in rigorous investigation—he 'turned' (sabboti, suggesting comprehensive examination from every angle) both himself and his heart toward the quest. The pairing chokhmah vecheshbon (wisdom and reason/accounting) indicates systematic analysis. But notably, his search included understanding resha kesel (the wickedness of folly)—recognizing evil requires intentional study, not just naive assumptions. The progression from kesel (folly) to siklut (foolishness) to holelot (madness) traces sin's degenerative path. Romans 1:21-22 describes identical progression: 'claiming to be wise, they became fools.'

## Historical Context

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Solomon's comprehensive investigations (1 Kings 4:32-34) included natural sciences, poetry, proverbs, and moral philosophy—arguably history's most ambitious intellectual project. Yet even this couldn't produce absolute wisdom.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. How seriously are you engaged in the pursuit of wisdom versus passively accepting cultural assumptions?
2. What does it mean to intentionally study 'the wickedness of folly'—understanding evil without participating in it?
3. How can you balance rigorous intellectual pursuit with humble recognition of wisdom's limits?

## Interlinear Text

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וְיָשְׁבַע וְיָשְׁבַע	אֲנִי	לִבִּי	וְלִדְעַת	וְלִדְעַת	וְלִדְעַת
I applied	H589	mine heart	of things and to know	and to search	and to seek out
H5437		H3820	H3045	H8446	H1245
חֵכֶם	וְחֵכֶם	וְלִדְעַת	וְלִדְעַת	וְלִדְעַת	וְלִדְעַת
wisdom	and the reason	of things and to know	the wickedness	of folly	
H2451	H2808	H3045	H7562	H3689	
וְהִסְכֵּל	וְהִסְכֵּל	וְהִסְכֵּל	וְהִסְכֵּל	וְהִסְכֵּל	וְהִסְכֵּל
even of foolishness	and madness				
H5531	H1947				

## Additional Cross-References

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**Ecclesiastes 10:13** (Parallel theme): The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness: and the end of his talk is mischievous madness.

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