

Ecclesiastes 7:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold, this have I found, saith the preacher, counting one by one, to find out the account:

Analysis

Behold, this have I found, saith the preacher (רָאָה זֶה מָצָאתִי אֶמְרָה קֹהֵלֶת, re'eh zeh matsati amrah qohelet)—'See, this I have found, says Qohelet.' The verb matsati (I have found) contrasts with verse 24's 'who can find it?'—some things can be discovered through diligent search. **Counting one by one, to find out the account** (אָחַת לְאָחַת לְמִצָּא חֶשְׁבֹן, achat le'achat limtso cheshbon)—literally 'one to one to find the reckoning,' suggesting painstaking, methodical analysis.

Qoheleth emphasizes his empirical method: achat le'achat (one by one) indicates systematic observation rather than hasty generalization. The term cheshbon (reckoning, account, sum) suggests he's seeking patterns or principles from accumulated data. This is inductive reasoning—examining individual cases to derive general conclusions. The phrase 'saith the preacher' (amrah qohelet) provides authorial emphasis, marking this as considered judgment, not casual opinion. What follows in verses 28-29 are his sobering findings from this methodical investigation of human nature and behavior.

Historical Context

This methodology reflects ancient wisdom tradition's empirical approach—observation, testing, reasoning from evidence. Unlike speculative Greek philosophy, Hebrew wisdom emphasized learning from concrete experience and documented observation.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does Qoheleth's 'one by one' method model careful investigation versus hasty judgment?
2. In what areas of understanding might you benefit from more systematic observation before drawing conclusions?
3. How do you balance inductive learning from experience with deductive application of revealed Scripture?

Interlinear Text

בְּרֹאֵה	זֶה	לָמַצַּא	אֶמְכָּה	קֹהֵלֵת	לְאֶחָד	לְאֶחָד
Behold	H2088	this have I found	saith	the preacher	by one	by one
H7200		H4672	H559	H6953	H259	H259
לָמַצַּא	חֲשׂוֹבֹן:					
this have I found	the account					
H4672	H2808					

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