

Ecclesiastes 7:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright;
but they have sought out many inventions.

Analysis

Lo, this only have I found (לֵבַד רָאֵה־זֶה מָצָאתִי, levad re'eh-zeh matsati)—'Only, see this I have found,' using levad (only/alone) to emphasize this is the single clear conclusion. **That God hath made man upright** (אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם יָשָׁר, asher asah ha'elohim et-ha'adam yashar)—'that God made humanity upright/straight.' **But they have sought out many inventions** (וְהִמָּה בִקְשׁוּ חִשְׁבֹּנוֹת רַבִּים, vehemmah biqshu chishbonot rabbim)—'but they have sought many schemes/devices.'

This verse provides the theological foundation for everything preceding: God created ha'adam (humanity—both male and female, Genesis 1:27) yashar (upright, straight, morally integrated). The problem isn't divine design but human rebellion—biqshu (they have sought) indicates active choice toward chishbonot rabbim (many schemes/inventions), using the same term cheshbon from verse 25. Humanity traded God's straight path for convoluted 'inventions.' This echoes Genesis 3—the Fall from original righteousness. Romans 5:12 explains: 'Sin came into the world through one man.' The rarity of finding righteous people (v. 28) stems not from creation but corruption. Yet redemption restores yashar: 'If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation' (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Historical Context

This reflects Genesis 1-3 theology: humanity created in God's image (upright) but fallen through disobedience (seeking inventions). The Hebrew yashar appears

throughout Scripture describing righteous living versus ish yashar be'einav ('everyone did what was right in his own eyes,' Judges 21:25).

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does understanding humanity's original righteousness and subsequent fall shape your view of human nature?
2. What 'inventions' or schemes do you observe in contemporary culture that represent departure from God's design?
3. How does the Gospel restore the 'uprightness' lost through human schemes and rebellion?

Interlinear Text

אֶת	הָאֱלֹהִים	עָשָׂה	אֱשֶׁר	רָמַצְתִּי	זֶה	רָאִה	לְבַד
this	only	Lo	H2088	have I found	H834	hath made	that God
H905	H7200			H4672		H6213	H853
רַבִּים:	חֲשֹׁבֹת	וְ	בִקְשׁוּ	וְ	מָה	יָשָׁר	הָאִדָּם
man	upright	H1992	but they have sought out	inventions	many		
H120	H3477		H1245	H2810	H7227		

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 4:22 (Parallel theme): For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.

Titus 3:3 (Parallel theme): For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

Psalms 106:39 (Parallel theme): Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions.

Psalms 106:29 (Parallel theme): Thus they provoked him to anger with their inventions: and the plague brake in upon them.

Psalms 99:8 (References God): Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.

Genesis 5:1 (Creation): This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him;