

Proverbs 30

1 The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, even the prophecy: the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal, [Proverbs 30](#) is a collection of wisdom from a man known only to this chapter of the Bible. When the men of Hezekiah gathered additional material for Proverbs ([Proverbs 25:1](#)), they added these words of Agur. We have no other mention of Agur the son of Jakeh. Solomon wasn't the only man of wisdom in his day or afterward. Other men of wisdom beside Solomon are described in [1 Kings 4:30-31](#).

2 Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man.

3 I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy. Many previous proverbs teach that humility is an essential aspect of wisdom. Here, with poetic exaggeration, Agur declared his own limitations when it comes to understanding and wisdom. David said, I was like a beast before you ([Psalm 73:22](#)). Job spoke of man, who is a worm ([Job 25:6](#)). Agur was also careful not to boast of his spiritual knowledge. He brings his lesson to us with great humility, not from a position of superiority.

4 Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell? In a section that sounds much like [Job 38-39](#), Agur called men and women to understand their limitations in understanding God and His creation. The wise answer to each of these questions is, God, and not man. After challenging his readers regarding the natural world, Agur finished with a challenge regarding man's limitations in spiritual knowledge. One can only know what is His name (God's nature, character) and His Son's name by God's own revelation. Agur

knew that God had a Son, and the Son had a name.

5 Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

6 Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.

In the context of writing about God's word, Agur explained that God is a shield. The sense is that God gives His pure word to protect His people if they will use the wisdom and encouragement of His word to put their trust in Him. God's word needs no addition or improvement from us. We don't need to take away from His words or add to His words (as in [Revelation 22:18-19](#)).

7 Two things have I required of thee; deny me them not before I die:

8 Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me:

9 Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.

These verses contain a wise and humble prayer from Agur. He earnestly asked God for two things, and he wanted to receive them on this side of eternity (Deprive me not before I die). Agur first asked for personal integrity. He wanted to be a man marked by truth, and not by falsehood and lies. Agur's second request was to have neither great poverty nor great riches. He wanted to be satisfied with God's provision in his life (feed me with the food allotted to me).

10 Accuse not a servant unto his master, lest he curse thee, and thou be found guilty.

11 There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother.

12 There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness.

13 There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up.

14 There is a generation, whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men.

15 The horseleach hath two daughters, crying, Give, give. There are three things that are never satisfied, yea, four things say not, It is enough: The generation that disobeys God's command to honor father and mother ([Exodus 20:12](#), [Ephesians 6:2](#)) puts its foolishness on full display. That generation sows seeds of conflict that will grow into a bitter harvest of personal and community strife. This sounds like what is happening today in the United States. The generation that is blind to their own stain of sin will never be washed from its filthiness. When we ignore or cover our sin, it never gets resolved. The generation that walks in pride and arrogance will experience God's resistance, because God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble ([James 4:6](#), [1 Peter 5:5](#)). The generation filled with greed devours everything as if their teeth were swords and their fangs like knives. Like the leech, can never be satisfied, they just take and take. With Leeches in your life or the church they need to be removed quickly so that the least amount of damage is done.

16 The grave; and the barren womb; the earth that is not filled with water; and the fire that saith not, It is enough. In the last portion of verse 15 and verse 16 The thought of the generation that greedily devours everything made Agur consider that there were four things that could never be satisfied. (1) The dead never seem to stop dying and the grave of humanity never seems to be filled. (2) The barren womb feels the ache of its emptiness and what is often felt like an unfulfilled purpose. (3) The earth seems to continually drink and absorb the water poured out upon it. (4) fire will burn as long as there is fuel to burn. These all are examples of things that never seem to say, "Enough!"

17The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it. [This fool was blind in his mocking and disobedience; this poetic image tells of a fit penalty for someone so morally and spiritually blind.](#) 18 There be three things which are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not: 19the way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a maid. (1)[All four things are visible for a while, then hidden.](#)(2)[All four things progress without leaving a trace.](#)(3)[All four things have a mysterious means of progress or motivation.](#)(4)[All four things move in the domain of something else.](#)The flight of a majestic eagle amazes us with its power, height, and grace. The serpent can slither itself over hard and sharp rock without injury! A ship is so small in the midst of the sea, yet it virtually conquers the sea by staying afloat and using it as a road for travel and trade.The power of young love. 20 Such is the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness. [This adulterous woman represents many who sin against God, their marriage, their family, their community, their partner in adultery, and their own bodies yet consider it no wickedness at all.](#) 21 For three things the earth is disquieted, and for four which it cannot bear: 22 For a servant when he reigneth; and a fool when he is filled with meat; 23 For an odious woman when she is married; and an handmaid that is heir to her mistress. A servant when he reigns: Agur did not mean a man with a servant's heart like Jesus would later perfectly display.A fool when he is filled with food: When a fool is satisfied by receiving from others, it only rewards his foolishness and gives him the energy and the resources to be even more foolish. A hateful woman when she is married: This is unbearable because

the hateful woman should never be able to find a husband, for she is unbearable by not only her husband but also her family. A maidservant who succeeds her mistress: This case is similar to the previously described servant when he reigns. When the social order is upset and unworthy ones dominate the culture, it becomes unbearable. [The tension from the threat of Hagar in Genesis 16:5 and 21:10 shows how unbearable this could be.](#)24 There be four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise:25 The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer;26 The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks;27 The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands;28he spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces. [Size doesn't determine wisdom. Agur list four examples](#)(1)Ants are small and don't have much strength compared to a person or a large animal. Their wisdom is shown in that they prepare their food in the summer. They work in the time when work can be done, and aren't lazy or procrastinators. Hard work can overcome individual weakness. (2)Marmots (Conies) don't have the speed or strength to stand against a large predator, especially one with sharp teeth. But they wisely make their homes in the crags and make the strength of the rock their own strength. Find refuge among the strong. For believers we find strength in Jesus Christ our rock and refuge. Draw close to him and he will draw close to you bringing security when we are attacked. (3)The locusts don't seem to have any kind of appointed leadership or structure. Yet they have the wisdom to advance in ranks, overwhelming anything that is in their way. Teamwork can win the day.(4)The spider isn't loved, but it wisely uses its skill and unique abilities to go anywhere it wants to, even in king's palaces. Using your gifts and

unique skills can take you anywhere. There are some who suggest a translation difference and say the spider is actually a gecko here, a "wall-lizard." but the meaning would still be the same. 29 There be three things which go well, yea, four are comely in going:30 A lion which is strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any;31 A greyhound; an he goat also; and a king, against whom there is no rising up.[Agur gives here four examples of Majesty](#) (1)A lion has respect from all other animals, moves swiftly, and never retreats (does not turn away from any). Courage displays majesty.(2)When we consider the speed and grace of a greyhound, we see majesty. There are a few commentators that see the translation as a strutting rooster. If it be that rooster is a more correct translation we can see majesty not in his speed of running but in his ability to draw attention or bring focus. (3)The stubborn persistence of the male goat, how he holds himself in his stance and the respect from the flock when he moves, in all of this we see majesty.(4)When we think of the power and determination of a king whose troops are with him, we see majesty. 32 If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, lay thine hand upon thy mouth. 33 Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter, and the wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood: so the forcing of wrath bringeth forth strife. [Agur personally expressed his own humility in the beginning of this chapter \(Proverbs 30:1-4\).](#) Here he advises his readers to not be foolish in exalting yourself. Instead, follow what James wisely told us to do: Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up ([James 4:10](#)). If you start to exalt yourself, put your hand on your mouth. Just as Churning milk makes butter and just like getting punched in the nose brings a bloody nose, the expressions of wrath will make for conflict and strife.