



THE PROVERBS OF AGUR 30:1-33

The first verse is the introduction, and does provide a main characteristic of what is before us in this chapter. It is referred to as *“The words of Agur, the son of Jakeb”* who these individuals are is unknown. *“Agur’s”* words were addressed to *“Ithiel”* and *“Ucal”* also unknown individuals. These were *“Agur’s”* pupils, perhaps his sons. *“The words of Agur”* are referred to as *“the prophecy”* meaning *“Divine instruction”* What *“Agur”* writes IS OF GOD!

I. THE CHARACTER OF AGUR [verses 2-9]

1. He Was Conscious Of His Own Ignorance [verses 2-3].

These are the words of one **who knows his own heart**, which is one of the first marks of wisdom. These are the words of one who felt his own **weakness** and **deficiency!** These words are expressive of **humility** and **abasement**, which is the result of knowing one’s own heart, and the result of being in the presence of God, and aware of the majesty of God [Job 40:4; 42:6; Isaiah 6:5; Daniel 10:8; Romans 7:14]. These are the words of one who realizes that he is a **needy** creature [Psalm 40:17; 70:5; 86:1; 109:22]. Perhaps, the purpose of these words was that his pupils *“Ithiel”* and *“Ucal”* not have excessive confidence in himself, so that they would nor permit their faith to stand in the wisdom of men [Psalm 118:9; 146:3; Isaiah 31:1; Jeremiah 17:5].

2. He Was Conscious Of The Mystery And Greatness Of God [verse 4].

There are five questions in this verse, and the only answer to all five is *“God”* These questions are expressive of the fact that man knows very little about the **ways** of God [Job 9:10; 26:14; Romans 11:33]. These questions reveal that God is **incomparable** and **unsearchable!** They are expressive of the **nature**, the **greatness**, the **extensiveness**, the **majesty** and **power** of God, and of the **mystery** of God’s government [Deuteronomy 29:29]. These questions reveal not only the **greatness** of God, but the **smallness** and **insignificance** of man. These questions are a challenge to men to give a full account of God, revealing the utter impossibility of such!

☞ *“Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended?”* The idea conveyed is, *“Who among men has ascended up to heaven, and seen all that there is about God, and descended to communicate it?”* ONLY GOD!

☞ *“Who hath gathered the wind in his fists?”* The idea conveyed is *“Who can hold the wind in his hand and manage them?”* ONLY GOD!

☞ *“Who hath bound the waters in a garment?”* The idea conveyed is *“Who can control the waters?”* ONLY GOD!

☞ *“Who hath established all the ends of the earth?”* The idea conveyed is *“Who has fixed the boundaries of the universe?”* ONLY GOD!

☞ *“What is his name, and what is his son’s name, if thou canst tell?”* The idea conveyed is *“Who can fully discover and explain the nature of God?”* ONLY GOD!

The sentiment of these questions is the same as what is found in **Job 11:7-9; 37:23; Ecclesiastes 3:11; 8:17; Isaiah 40:28; Romans 11:34.**

3. He Was Conscious Of The Greatness Of God’s Word [verses 5, 6].

“Every word of God is pure” [verse 5]. Notice, it is *“every word”* There are no exceptions! *“Every word of God is pure”* without the least mixture of falsehood! The Word of God is **flawless, wholesome, healthy, and virtuous!** The words of men must be read with some caution, BUT NOT SO WITH THE WORD OF GOD! Because *“Every word of God is pure”* it is not to be added to [verse 6]. *“Every word of God is pure”* Agur stated this truth so that *Ithiel* and *Ucal* would not put their trust in his words, but the word of God!

4. He Realized The Importance Of Trusting The Lord [verse 5].

“He (God) is a shield unto them that put (place) their trust (confidence) in him” To *“trust”* God is **dependence** and **reliance** upon Him, it is **surrender** to Him, it is **leaning** upon Him, **resting** upon Him, and **cleaving** to Him! It is **looking** to God, **coming** unto God, and **living** in the reality of God! The encouragement to *“trust”* Him is found in His **greatness** [verse 4], and the **purity** of His word [verse 5]. Those who *“trust”* God have a personal relationship with Him and are shielded by Him- *“he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him”*

5. A Man Fearful Of Sinning [verses 7-9].

Realizing his **weakness** and **deficiency** he prayed for specific help in two areas of weakness.

☞ *“Remove far from me (from my heart, and from the course of my life) vanity and lies”* [verse 8]. This is a prayer that God would remove from him vain **thoughts, affections, words, and actions**, and to protect him from all error in doctrine and practice.

☞ *“give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient (suitable an appropriate) for me”* [verse 8]. He desired that the *Lord* give him what his condition and circumstances required, nothing more, nothing less. HE KNEW THAT GOD KNEW BEST, AND HE SIMPLY ASKED GOD TO GIVE HIM WHAT HE NEEDED! Another reason he requested this was because he knew the dangerous predisposition of his own heart and mind [verse 9]. This realization of danger is seen from the word *“lest”* (to avoid the risk of), and from the word *“deny”* (he wanted to avoid the risk of **contradicting, refusing, or renouncing**

God), from the question *“Who is the LORD?”* (the risk of self-sufficiency and practical atheism).

II. OBSERVATIONS OF AGUR [verses 10-33]

From these verses, *Agur* was not a man that was **oblivious**, to what was around him, but was very much **aware**, and was able to receive spiritual instruction from what he observed, and make spiritual application.

1. Some Words Of Advice Concerning Slander [verse 10].

“Slander” is *“the act of making false statements, damaging to a person’s character”* The book of **Proverbs** speaks of such as an act of foolishness [10:18], and also speaks of the spirit behind such an act [16:27].

2. Four Wicked Generations [verses 11-14].

In these verses *Agur* is describing four different masses of people, that he no doubt had observed. These four *“generations”* belong to every age, and are a **portrait of the natural man**.

☞ *“There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother”* [verse 11]. This speaks of **disrespect**, which manifests itself by a **resistance** of authority, **contempt** of reproof, and shamelessly **defiling** of the name of parents. The cursing of a parent met with the same punishment as the blaspheming of God [Deuteronomy 21:18-21]. Man by nature, resists authority, and has contempt for reproof.

☞ *“There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness”* [verse 12]. This speaks of **self-righteousness**, which manifests itself in a failure to see one’s own sin, even while living in such. This speaks of the **self-delusion** of man.

☞ *“There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes and their eyelids are lifted up”* [verse 13]. This speaks of **pride**, **haughtiness**, and **arrogance**.

☞ *“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”* [verse 14]. This speaks of the spirit of **oppression**, the desire to rule over others, and manifests itself by taking advantage, or mistreating the needy.

Man by nature is **disrespectful** (has contempt for authority, reproof, and others), **self-righteous** (hypocritical, self-satisfied, a feeling of superiority), **proud**, and **oppressive**.

3. Four Things Never Satisfied [verses 15-16].

Verse 15 introduces the theme of the four things mentioned in verse 16. The four things mentioned in verse 16 resemble the “*horseleach*” which depicts the attitude of greed, the insistence of having more, the cravings of human lust. The four things mentioned in verse 16 are an example of the discontent, and unquenchable desires of man, and are a **portrait of the heart of the natural man.**

☞ “*The grave*” Throughout the history of the world, innumerable multitudes have been put in graves, yet “*the grave*” is not full, it waits for more [Proverbs 27:20; Habakkuk 2:5].

☞ “*the barren womb*” This represents the impatience of man to receive what he desires [Genesis 30:1].

☞ “*the earth that is not filled with water*” Though large quantities of water may fall upon it, it drinks it in and thirsts for more.

☞ “*the fire that saith not, It is enough*” The “*fire*” never ceases to burn as long as fuel is supplied, and the lusts of man never ceases to burn.

4. A Warning Concerning Irreverence To Parents [verse 17].

Here *Agur* returns to the first generation that he had observed, speaking of the one who has scorn and disdain for the advice, admonitions, and instruction of parents, and who are disobedient! Such an individual is warned of God’s displeasure and judgment!

5. Four Amazing And Mysterious Things [verses 18-19].

The four things mentioned in verse 19 are things that *Agur* did not fully understand or comprehend. He mentions “*the way*” (the manner of doing something) of the “*eagle*” the “*serpent*” the “*ship*” and a “*man*” and these are figures of that which cannot be fully discovered or traced. From the illustration given in verse 20, *Agur* is speaking of the fact that the ways of the deceitful heart, and the ways of sin cannot be fully traced.

6. Four Things That The World Finds Unbearable [verses 21-23].

Agur mentions some things that are intolerable, things that bring confusion. The things that he mentions are things that are out of place, and out of order. He mentions a **servant who is in a position of rule**, a **fool who abounds in wealth**, a **hateful woman who is married**, and a **handmaid that is heir to her mistress**. These things bring confusion and chaos to God’s order of things. This is a figure of the havoc, the disruption, and the upheaval that sin causes. A figure of the mess that sin causes.

7. Four Small But Wise Things [verses 24-28].

Agur, here mentions four things that appear to be insignificant, but are very admirable for their wisdom. These four things are a picture of some of the characteristics necessary for kingdom living:

☞ “*The ants*” [verse 25]. *Solomon* spoke of “*the ant*” [Proverbs 6:6-8]. “*The ants*” have great **foresight**, they are wise enough to prepare for both the predictable and the unpredictable. They are **diligent**, **persevering**, and very **effective**, they make use of time and season, and are **self-motivated**, working quietly and without show, working together in systems of organization for the well-being of the whole community

☞ “*The conies*” [verse 26]. The “*conies*” are wise because they have an awareness of their own weakness and vulnerability, and they know that they need a power greater than themselves. The “*conies*” are wise enough not to venture away from the rocks [Psalm 104:18], they know where to flee! Wisdom should teach us our own feebleness and drive us to the Lord for shelter and support. WE MUST KNOW WHERE OUR SECURITY LIES [Psalm 62:5-7].

☞ “*The locusts*” [verse 27]. They have no king, yet they have great **regularity** and **order!** They gather in one place, associate and join themselves in bands and keep together. They all keep their ranks, working together, without fighting for position.

☞ “*The spider*” [verse 28]. They are very ingenious in weaving their webs with detail and exactness. They are known for their **innovation**, **patience**, untiring **labor**, and **perseverance!** The “*spider*” possesses these qualities, whether in a poor or rich man’s dwellings.

The “*ant*” is known for its great **foresight** and **readiness**, the “*conies*” for their **habitation**, the “*locusts*” for their **cooperation**, and the “*spider*” for their **aspiration!** Four very small and insignificant creatures, that are able to accomplish great things! Though insignificant in the eyes of the world, the children of God are able to accomplish great things through Him.

8. Four Impressive Creatures [verses 29-31].

Agur, here mentions four things that appear to be very majestic in their going, and also serve as a picture of some of the characteristics necessary for kingdom living:

☞ “*A lion*” [verse 30]. **Strength** and **courage** are the main characteristics of the “*lion*” These two characteristics are necessary in serving the Lord [Deuteronomy 31:6; Joshua 1:6-7, 9].

☞ “*A greyhound*” [verse 31]. **Agility** and **swiftness** are the characteristics of the “*greyhound*” The child of God should be **quick** to hear the instruction of God [James 1:19], and to do the will of God.

☞ “*an he goat*” [verse 31]. Courage, resolution, and example are the characteristics of the “*he goat*” The child of God should be determined and able to lead others in the right way, being a good example in all things [I Thessalonians 1:7; I Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:7; James 5:10].

☞ “*a king*” [verse 31]. He has the confidence of the people he represents, and he maintains his authority in all situations and circumstances. The child of God should be one that others have confidence (trust) in, and be one who maintains a good testimony in all situations and circumstances.

The chapter closes with a word of caution and advice [verses 32-33]. From these two verses we learn that it is wise to quench the first risings of resentment before it kindle into a flame. The advice given is not to provoke irritation, but to bridle and suppress our own sinful passions.