

# Abide in Me

**John 15:4**

*Bible studies for disciples  
who make disciples*



Volume 8 - Number 22

The Week of March 26, 2023

*Get Wisdom*

**Be Not Wise in Your Own Eyes**

Proverbs 30:1-33

Welcome to the last message in our Proverbs' series. All of Proverbs 30 is a unified whole composed by a man named Agur. His name, and his father's name Jakeh, are non-Hebrew names mentioned nowhere else in the Bible. They may have hailed from an Ishmaelite clan in Arabia mentioned in Genesis 25:14 and 1 Chronicles 1:30. Agur's sayings are inspired and reinforce the understanding that wisdom does not originate with us but is the result of the fear of the Lord.

## READING PROVERBS 30

The words of Agur son of Jakeh. The oracle.

- <sup>1</sup> The man declares, I am weary, O God;  
I am weary, O God, and worn out.
- <sup>2</sup> Surely I am too stupid to be a man.  
I have not the understanding of a man.
- <sup>3</sup> I have not learned wisdom,  
nor have I knowledge of the Holy One.
- <sup>4</sup> Who has ascended to heaven and come down?  
Who has gathered the wind in his fists?  
Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment?  
Who has established all the ends of the earth?  
What is his name, and what is his son's name?  
Surely you know!
- <sup>5</sup> Every word of God proves true;  
he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.
- <sup>6</sup> Do not add to his words,  
lest he rebuke you and you be found a liar.
- <sup>7</sup> Two things I ask of you;  
deny them not to me before I die:
- <sup>8</sup> Remove far from me falsehood and lying;  
give me neither poverty nor riches;  
feed me with the food that is needful for me,
- <sup>9</sup> lest I be full and deny you  
and say, "Who is the Lord?"  
or lest I be poor and steal  
and profane the name of my God.
- <sup>10</sup> Do not slander a servant to his master,  
lest he curse you, and you be held guilty.
- <sup>11</sup> There are those who curse their fathers  
and do not bless their mothers.

- <sup>12</sup> There are those who are clean in their own eyes  
but are not washed of their filth.
- <sup>13</sup> There are those—how lofty are their eyes,  
how high their eyelids lift!
- <sup>14</sup> There are those whose teeth are swords,  
whose fangs are knives,  
to devour the poor from off the earth,  
the needy from among mankind.
- <sup>15</sup> The leech has two daughters:  
Give and Give.  
Three things are never satisfied;  
four never say, "Enough":
- <sup>16</sup> Sheol, the barren womb,  
the land never satisfied with water,  
and the fire that never says, "Enough."
- <sup>17</sup> The eye that mocks a father  
and scorns to obey a mother  
will be picked out by the ravens of the valley  
and eaten by the vultures.
- <sup>18</sup> Three things are too wonderful for me;  
four I do not understand:
- <sup>19</sup> the way of an eagle in the sky,  
the way of a serpent on a rock,  
the way of a ship on the high seas,  
and the way of a man with a virgin.
- <sup>20</sup> This is the way of an adulteress:  
she eats and wipes her mouth  
and says, "I have done no wrong."
- <sup>21</sup> Under three things the earth trembles;  
under four it cannot bear up:
- <sup>22</sup> a slave when he becomes king,  
and a fool when he is filled with food;

<sup>23</sup> an unloved woman when she gets a husband,  
and a maidservant when she displaces her mistress.  
<sup>24</sup> Four things on earth are small,  
but they are exceedingly wise:  
<sup>25</sup> the ants are a people not strong,  
yet they provide their food in the summer;  
<sup>26</sup> the rock badgers are a people not mighty,  
yet they make their homes in the cliffs;  
<sup>27</sup> the locusts have no king,  
yet all of them march in rank;  
<sup>28</sup> the lizard you can take in your hands,  
yet it is in kings' palaces.

<sup>29</sup> Three things are stately in their tread;  
four are stately in their stride:  
<sup>30</sup> the lion, which is mightiest among beasts  
and does not turn back before any;  
<sup>31</sup> the strutting rooster, the he-goat,  
and a king whose army is with him.  
<sup>32</sup> If you have been foolish, exalting yourself,  
or if you have been devising evil,  
put your hand on your mouth.  
<sup>33</sup> For pressing milk produces curds,  
pressing the nose produces blood,

## OBSERVING THE PASSAGE

- In the inscription, under the word *oracle* write *An inspired utterance*.
- Place a  $\Delta$  over each reference to God in verses 1-9.
- In the left margin of verses 1-9 write the word *Humility*.
- In verse 4 circle all four occurrences of *who*.
- Place a  $\dagger$  over *his son's name* in verse 4.
- In the left margin of verse 5 write *The Bible*.
- In the left margin of verses 7-9 write *The only prayer in Proverbs*.
- In the left margin of verses 10-17 write the words *Pride and Arrogance*.
- Circle the word *lofty* in verse 13.
- Double underline all the occurrences of *there are those* in verses 11-14.
- In the margin of verses 18-31 write the word *Wonder*.
- Draw a circle around all of verse 32.
- Underline all occurrences of the word *pressing* in verse 33.

## EXPLORING PROVERBS THROUGH DISCUSSION

1. What is your initial impression of Proverbs 30?
2. Create a brief profile of Agur from this passage. Agur has a big view of God. In what ways is this reflected in this chapter?
3. How does recognizing our limitations help us move towards wisdom? How does thinking you are wise make you foolish?
4. If wisdom resides with God, then how do we go about cultivating a life of wisdom according to verses 5-6?
5. What did Agur say about God's Word?

6. In what ways might Bible teachers and Christians be tempted to *add* to God's Word? Give some examples of how you have seen this done.
7. We know what's wrong with subtracting from God's Word, but what's wrong with adding to it?
8. When it comes to money, what do you tend to ask God for? How does Agur's prayer help you? What do you think is harder—having too little or more than enough?
9. What kinds of things (other than financial) cause discontentment in your life?
10. How does the culture around us encourage arrogance instead of humility?
11. Why do some members of a given generation tend to view the past as better than the present?
12. Why are we so prone to a self-righteous spirit?
13. What are some practical ways you can model the behavior of the small but wise creatures mentioned in verses 24-28?
14. What do you find interesting about Agur's observations about nature?
15. How can observing the natural world enhance your view of the greatness of God?

## **WRAP UP**

Thinking back over this entire series, what lessons have stood out to you? How do they reinforce the command to *get wisdom*?

