

THE WORDS OF AGUR

By Dr. Gary M. Gulan, ©1986 (Rev. 96)

Lesson #34
Proverbs 30:1-33

Introduction: Who is "Agur?" There are three possible choices:

1. Solomon, this was his nick name. (Hebrew Midrash)
2. An unknown sage, possibly a friend or student of Solomon.
3. Not a person (i.e. proper name), but rather a verb meaning "fear."

What is the "prophecy?"

1. The word "prophecy" (Heb. "hammassa") means "a weighty message."
2. It is possible that the word for prophecy (Heb. "massa") is a place.

Who are "Ithiel and Ucal?"

1. They are other unknown wise sages, possibly friends or students of Solomon.
2. They may not be proper names but appellatives "assembler and teacher."
3. They may not be proper names but verbs meaning "weary and faint." (LXX)
"I am weary, O God, weary and faint."
4. They may not be proper names but words for "God and power."
"I am not a God, I am not a God that I should have power."

(Book of Proverbs, Crawford Howell Toy, as found in The Expositor's Bible Commentary, page 1118)

(Book of Proverbs, Sid S. Buzzell, as found in The Bible Knowledge Commentary, page 969)

1. TWO THINGS TO BE DESIRED Proverbs 30:7-9

- A. Proverbs 30:8 = remove far from me vanity and lies
- B. Proverbs 30:8 = give me neither poverty nor riches.

Summary note: Views of self, use of the facts, and relationships to money can corrupt one's life.

2. FOUR KINDS OF UNDESIRABLE BEHAVIOR Proverbs 30:11-14

- A. Proverbs 30:11 = cursing one's parents (disrespectful)
- B. Proverbs 30:12 = think your clean, but are not cleansed (hypocritical).
- C. Proverbs 30:13 = lofty in eyes (self-righteous or arrogant)
- D. Proverbs 30:14 = devour the poor (ruthless or oppressive)

Summary note: "Generations" (Hebrew "dor") means "classes or groups." It could refer to people or behavior of people. Moral of the story: 1. evil in the early life at home could progress into a wicked lifestyle; 2. there are four groups within a society that will corrupt it into a wicked a generation.

3. FOUR THINGS NEVER SATISFIED Proverbs 30:15-16

- A. Proverbs 30:16 = the grave
- B. Proverbs 30:16 = the barren womb
- C. Proverbs 30:16 = the earth that is not filled with water
- D. Proverbs 30:16 = the fire that saith not it is enough

Summary note: Leeches graphically picture greed, because they want more of what is desired and are never satisfied. These insatiable desires may have sexual connotations as these items may be used as figures of speech.

4. FOUR AMAZING THINGS Proverbs 30:18-19

- A. Proverbs 30:19 = the way of an eagle
- B. Proverbs 30:19 = the way of a serpent upon a rock
- C. Proverbs 30:19 = the way of a ship in the midst of the sea
- D. Proverbs 30:19 = the way of a man with a maid

Summary note: the way of these above items is: 1. mysterious, and, 2. untraceable. Moral of the story: each of these items faces difficulty and in order to survive must master an element of its circumstances; and each of these items controls its destiny to some degree by the choices it makes.

5. FOUR UNBEARABLE THINGS Proverbs 30:21-23

- A. Proverbs 30:22 = for a servant when he reigneth
- B. Proverbs 30:22 = a fool when he is filled with meat
- C. Proverbs 30:23 = for an odious (unloved, unattractive) woman when she is married
- D. Proverbs 30:23 = an handmaid that is heir to her mistress

Summary note: hyperbolas are used to describe the earth, in that the earth represents the people who are on it. Moral of the story: harmony in society is encouraged when people maintain their proper roles and do not assume positions they are incapable of handling. Life can become intolerable when there are upheavals in the proper order of things without a change of nature to handle it.

6. FOUR SMALL WISE THINGS Proverbs 30:24-28

- A. Proverbs 30:25 = ants not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer
- B. Proverbs 30:26 = conies (rock badgers) are feeble, yet make their houses in rocks
- C. Proverbs 30:27 = locust have no leader, yet go forth by bands
- D. Proverbs 30:28 = spider taketh hold with hands yet located in palaces.

Summary note: Each of these items is extremely wise. God provides for small creatures in their situations, how much more for us. Moral of the story: survival in life is based on wisdom not on strength, defenses, leadership, or location; and, physical limitations and limited resources may be compensated for in other ways.

7. FOUR STATELY CREATURES Proverbs 30:29-31

- A. Proverbs 30:30 = a lion
- B. Proverbs 30:31 = a greyhound (strutting rooster)
- C. Proverbs 30:31 = a he goat

D. Proverbs 30:31 = a king

Summary note: Moral of the story, natural leadership qualities may be vested in not retreating from the contest, using the resources you were given, having a firm footing, and surrounding yourself with a ready defense.

Conclusion: Proverbs 30 provides a wealth of information concerning the application of wisdom to life.