

"Ordinary Advice for Extraordinary Times"

5. What can we learn from worldly wisdom? (Proverbs 30)

<p>Prov 30:1 The sayings of Agur son of Jakeh - an inspired utterance. This man's utterance to Ithiel:</p> <p>"I am weary, God, but I can prevail. 2 Surely I am only a brute, not a man; I do not have human understanding. 3 I have not learned wisdom, nor have I attained to the knowledge of the Holy One. 4 Who has gone up to heaven and come down? Whose hands have gathered up the wind? Who has wrapped up the waters in a cloak? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is the name of his son? Surely you know!</p> <p>5 "Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. 6 Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar.</p> <p>7 "Two things I ask of you, LORD; do not refuse me before I die: 8 Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. 9 Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, 'Who is the LORD?' Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God.</p>	<p>10 "Do not slander a servant to their master, or they will curse you, and you will pay for it.</p> <p>11 "There are those who curse their fathers and do not bless their mothers; 12 those who are pure in their own eyes and yet are not cleansed of their filth; 13 those whose eyes are ever so haughty, whose glances are so disdainful; 14 those whose teeth are swords and whose jaws are set with knives to devour the poor from the earth and the needy from among mankind.</p> <p>15 "The leech has two daughters. 'Give! Give!' they cry. "There are three things that are never satisfied, four that never say, 'Enough!': 16 the grave, the barren womb, land, which is never satisfied with water, and fire, which never says, 'Enough!'</p> <p>17 "The eye that mocks a father, that scorns an aged mother, will be pecked out by the ravens of the valley, will be eaten by the vultures.</p> <p>18 "There are three things that are too amazing for me, four that I do not understand: 19 the way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a snake on a rock, the way of a ship on the high seas, and the way of a man with a young woman.</p>	<p>20 "This is the way of an adulterous woman: She eats and wipes her mouth and says, 'I've done nothing wrong.'</p> <p>21 "Under three things the earth trembles, under four it cannot bear up: 22 a servant who becomes king, a godless fool who gets plenty to eat, 23 a contemptible woman who gets married, and a servant who displaces her mistress.</p> <p>24 "Four things on earth are small, yet they are extremely wise: 25 Ants are creatures of little strength, yet they store up their food in the summer; 26 hyraxes are creatures of little power, yet they make their home in the crags; 27 locusts have no king, yet they advance together in ranks; 28 a lizard can be caught with the hand, yet it is found in kings' palaces.</p> <p>29 "There are three things that are stately in their stride, four that move with stately bearing: 30 a lion, mighty among beasts, who retreats before nothing; 31 a strutting rooster, a he-goat, and a king secure against revolt.</p> <p>32 "If you play the fool and exalt yourself, or if you plan evil, clap your hand over your mouth! 33 For as churning cream produces butter, and as twisting the nose produces blood, so stirring up anger produces strife."</p>
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The Structure of the Book of Proverbs		
Chapters	Section	Talk Topics
1:1-7	Introduction	1. Do you want to be wise?
1:8-9:18	Instruction	2. Choose wisdom not folly
10:1-31:9	Sayings	3. Ethics by soundbites
		4. The ant and the sluggard
		5. What can we learn from worldly wisdom?
31:10-31	Conclusion	6. The (impossibly) perfect wife

1. The sayings of Agur son of Jakeh - an inspired utterance

i. The content curator's introduction (v1a)

ii. Agur's (futile) quest (vv1b-4)

iii. Agur's hope (vv5-6)

iv. Agur's two-fold prayer (vv7-9)

v. Agur's "worldly wisdom" (vv10-33)

- "God has written in 2 books"

Ps 19:7 The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul.
 Ps 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

2. But worldly wisdom is insufficient to save

Rom 1:18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, 19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

- general revelation vs special revelation

1 Cor 1:18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

3. "Your word"

Ps 119:105 Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.

i. daily devotions

2 Ki 23:1 Then the king [*Josiah*] called together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. 2 He went up to the temple of the Lord with the people of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests and the prophets—all the people from the least to the greatest. He read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant, which had been found in the temple of the Lord.

Mt 4:4 Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

For discussion/reflection: what obstacles are preventing YOU from daily devotions?

ii. memory verses