

Proverbs Collection VI: The Sayings of Agur son of Jakeh (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Proverbs 30

Agur's Autobiographical Confession

1 The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, the oracle. The man declares to Ithiel, to Ithiel and Ucal:

- 2 Surely I am more stupid than any man,
And I do not have the understanding of a man.
- 3 Neither have I learned wisdom,
Nor do I have the knowledge of the Holy One.
- 4 Who has ascended into heaven and descended?
Who has gathered the wind in His fists?
Who has wrapped the waters in His garment?
Who has established all the ends of the earth?
What is His name or His son's name?
Surely you know!
- 5 Every word of God is tested;
He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him.
- 6 Do not add to His words
Or He will reprove you, and you will be proved a liar.
- 7 Two things I asked of You,
Do not refuse me before I die:
- 8 Keep deception and lies far from me,
Give me neither poverty nor riches;
Feed me with the food that is my portion,
- 9 That I not be full and deny *You* and say, "Who is the LORD?"
Or that I not be in want and steal,
And profane the name of my God.

Agur's Evil Generations

- 10 Do not slander a slave to his master,
Or he will curse you and you will be found guilty.
- 11 There is a kind of *man* who curses his father
And does not bless his mother.
- 12 There is a kind who is pure in his own eyes,
Yet is not washed from his filthiness.
- 13 There is a kind—oh how lofty are his eyes!
And his eyelids are raised *in arrogance*.
- 14 There is a kind of *man* whose teeth are *like* swords
And his jaw teeth *like* knives,
To devour the afflicted from the earth
And the needy from among men.

Agur's Numerical Proverbs

- 15 The leech has two daughters,
"Give," "Give."
There are three things that will not be satisfied,
Four that will not say, "Enough":
- 16 Sheol, and the barren womb,
Earth that is never satisfied with water,
And fire that never says, "Enough."
- 17 The eye that mocks a father
And scorns a mother,
The ravens of the valley will pick it out,
And the young eagles will eat it.
- 18 There are three things which are too wonderful for me,
Four which I do not understand:
- 19 The way of an eagle in the sky,
The way of a serpent on a rock,

- The way of a ship in the middle of the sea,
And the way of a man with a maid.
- 20 This is the way of an adulterous woman:
She eats and wipes her mouth,
And says, "I have done no wrong."
- 21 Under three things the earth quakes,
And under four, it cannot bear up:
- 22 Under a slave when he becomes king,
And a fool when he is satisfied with food,
- 23 Under an unloved woman when she gets a husband,
And a maidservant when she supplants her mistress.
- 24 Four things are small on the earth,
But they are exceedingly wise:
- 25 The ants are not a strong people,
But they prepare their food in the summer;
- 26 The shephanim are not mighty people,
Yet they make their houses in the rocks;
- 27 The locusts have no king,
Yet all of them go out in ranks;
- 28 The lizard you may grasp with the hands,
Yet it is in kings' palaces.
- 29 There are three things which are stately in *their* march,
Even four which are stately when they walk:
- 30 The lion *which* is mighty among beasts
And does not retreat before any,
- 31 The strutting rooster, the male goat also,
And a king *when his* army is with him.
- 32 If you have been foolish in exalting yourself
Or if you have plotted *evil*, *put your* hand on your mouth.
- 33 For the churning of milk produces butter,
And pressing the nose brings forth blood;
So the churning of anger produces strife.

Proverbs Collection VII: The Sayings of Lemuel (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Proverbs 31

1 The words of King Lemuel, the oracle which his mother taught him:

The Noble King

- 2 What, O my son?
And what, O son of my womb?
And what, O son of my vows?
- 3 Do not give your strength to women,
Or your ways to that which destroys kings.
- 4 It is not for kings, O Lemuel,
It is not for kings to drink wine,
Or for rulers to desire strong drink,
- 5 For they will drink and forget what is decreed,
And pervert the rights of all the afflicted.
- 6 Give strong drink to him who is perishing,
And wine to him whose life is bitter.
- 7 Let him drink and forget his poverty
And remember his trouble no more.
- 8 Open your mouth for the mute,
For the rights of all the unfortunate.
- 9 Open your mouth, judge righteously,
And defend the rights of the afflicted and needy.

The Noble Wife

- 10 An excellent wife, who can find?
For her worth is far above jewels.
- 11 The heart of her husband trusts in her,
And he will have no lack of gain.
- 12 She does him good and not evil
All the days of her life.
- 13 She looks for wool and flax
And works with her hands in delight.
- 14 She is like merchant ships;
She brings her food from afar.
- 15 She rises also while it is still night
And gives food to her household
And portions to her maidens.
- 16 She considers a field and buys it;
From her earnings she plants a vineyard.
- 17 She girds herself with strength
And makes her arms strong.
- 18 She senses that her gain is good;
Her lamp does not go out at night.
- 19 She stretches out her hands to the distaff,
And her hands grasp the spindle.
- 20 She extends her hand to the poor,
And she stretches out her hands to the needy.
- 21 She is not afraid of the snow for her household,
For all her household are clothed with scarlet.
- 22 She makes coverings for herself;
Her clothing is fine linen and purple.
- 23 Her husband is known in the gates,
When he sits among the elders of the land.
- 24 She makes linen garments and sells *them*,
And supplies belts to the tradesmen.
- 25 Strength and dignity are her clothing,
And she smiles at the future.
- 26 She opens her mouth in wisdom,
And the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.
- 27 She looks well to the ways of her household,
And does not eat the bread of idleness.
- 28 Her children rise up and bless her;
Her husband *also*, and he praises her, *saying*:
- 29 "Many daughters have done nobly,
But you excel them all."
- 30 Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain,
But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.
- 31 Give her the product of her hands,
And let her works praise her in the gates.

Scripture quotations are from the New American Standard Bible, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation La Habra, Calif. Used by permission. All rights reserved. For Permission to Quote Information visit <http://www.lockman.org>.