

Proverbs

THE SAYINGS OF
AGUR AND KING LEMUEL





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Have you ever been in a situation with a family member or dear friend whom you know needs advice, godly wisdom, and direction, yet you know they will not receive this loving guidance from you? Maybe you need help and do not want to listen again to someone close in your life tell you things. Let's be honest; we know our immediate family and close friends' faults and sometimes don't want to hear them telling us how to handle our mess.

Years ago, in a family situation, I tried and tried and finally came to realize my precious loved one just would never listen to me or take what I was saying the way I meant it. So, I started praying that God would bring a person into their life that would come alongside, someone they would trust and respect, who would give the words of wisdom and truth, and that my family member's heart would be prepared to receive even words that were hard to hear, knowing there was truth in what was being said. I prayed for this situation for a long time, and then in God's perfect timing, that person came into all our lives for a season and was able to minister to my family member in a way I could never have. Thank you, LORD.

I find myself praying this same prayer for a different person right now in my life, in a completely different circumstance. You see, I know she will never accept what needs to be said, nor the guidance and support from me. I am waiting, and I know God will prepare her and bring her the right person.

Our study is all about gaining wisdom. God will convict us of some things that might be hard to read and to really take to heart, yet He knows what we need to hear and learn. Maybe you are the one waiting for someone to come and be a supportive person at this time of your life and the circumstances you find yourself in today. Pray and ask God to bring someone to you.

In the first situation I talked about that happened years ago, the person God brought to our family was a stranger. How do you feel about taking advice and gleaning wisdom and understanding from someone you do not know well?

This week, we will study the words of wisdom that God gave to two people that are not mentioned anywhere else in the Bible. They are strangers to us. I ask that you pray and prepare your heart, open your mind to what these people, whom God sent, have to say to us this week.

God's Word tells us in Psalm 32:8, *"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with my eye."*

Job 22:22 says, *"Receive, please, instruction from His mouth, and lay up His Words in your heart."*

Proverbs 30:1-6

Proverbs 30:1 states, *"The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, his utterance [oracle]. This man declared to Ithiel – to Ithiel and Ucal."*

1. Define **utterance/oracle**.



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1 Corinthians 12:8 (ESV): *“For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit.”*

2. Where do wisdom and knowledge come from?

3. Who is speaking, and to whom is he speaking?

Agur is not mentioned anywhere else in the Bible, yet God tells us he is a man who has the wisdom to share with us. Some commentaries have speculated that Agur could be another name for Solomon. I do not believe we should speculate on this where God is silent. We must give our full attention to what the writer of Proverbs 30 is teaching us.

“Surely, I am more stupid than any man, and do not have the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom nor have knowledge of the Holy One” (Proverbs 30:2-3).

4. How does it help us when we admit we have limited knowledge or understanding of a situation?

5. Define **humility**.

“The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom, and before honor is humility” (Proverbs 15:33).

Psalm 86:11: *“Teach me Your way, O LORD, I will walk in Your truth; unite my heart to fear Your name.”*

6. How do you honor God in your life when you act with humility?

Read Proverbs 30:4. This verse describes man’s humble place before God.

7. How often is the word **Who** used in this verse?

8. Who is **Who**?

Read verses 5 and 6 of Proverbs 30.

9. What do these verses say about God’s Word and about God Himself?



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10. If we add to God's Word, what happens to us?

God wants us to have a proper perspective of the purity, strength, and integrity of His Word. God gives us a very stern warning regarding His Word in Revelation 22:18-19

Proverbs 30:7-15—The Wisdom of Agur

Two things I ask of You, don't deny them to me before I die: keep falsehood and deceitful words far from me. Give me neither poverty nor wealth, feed me with the food I need. Otherwise, I might have too much and deny You, saying, "Who is the LORD?" or I might have nothing and steal, profaning the name of God (Proverbs 30:7-9 Holman Study Bible).

11. What are the two things Agur has asked God to give him this side of heaven?

12. What do these verses say about food?

- John 6:35
- Matthew 4:4
- Matthew 5:6
- Proverbs 16:24
- Psalms 107:9

13. What kind of food do you need from God right now?

14. What ideas can you share with your group on how to obtain this food?



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15. Read Jesus' model prayer in Matthew 6:9-13, and read what Paul says in Philippians 4:12-13. How do these verses mirror Proverbs 30:7-9?

Read Proverbs 30:10. This verse is talking about slandering another, and spreading false narrative, especially behind someone's back.

16. Has this ever happened to you?

17. If we choose to slander another, what does this say about us?

"Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers" (Ephesians 4:29).

Read Proverbs 30:11-15a and verse 17 about a foolish generation.

18. How many times is the word **generation** used?

19. What does each verse say about **the generation**?

- vs. 11

- vs. 12

- vs. 13

- vs. 14

- vs. 15a

"The leech has two daughters – Give and Give!" This is a very graphic statement. I don't want to be too gross with you, but leeches have two heads that suck the lifeblood from their victims. They do not contribute in a positive way and just take and take for themselves.



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20. Give an example of a person who is a **taker**.

21. Give an example of a person who is a **giver**.

Proverbs 30:17 speaks of the eye, indicating moral and spiritual blindness. Matthew 6:22-23 says, “*The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!*”

These are difficult verses to read, and I know that many of you struggle in your relationship with a parent or are a parent and struggle with a child. Remember, sweet ladies, we are doing this study to seek wisdom. Let God minister to your heart today.

Take a few minutes to pray about your situation, ask God to heal the hurt inside you, and fill you with His love, comfort, and peace so that you can have light within you. Below is a space to journal your feelings or write out your prayer.

In verse 15b, the author says, “*There are three things...four..*” which is a poetic way of saying this list presented is not complete. The following are observations from Agur.

22. Proverbs 30:15b-16 What are the four things that never say *Enough*?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

23. Read Proverbs 30:18-19. What are the four things which are just *too wonderful* and more than we can completely understand?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.



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Then we have Proverbs 30:20. “*This is the way of an adulterous woman; she eats and wipes her mouth and says, ‘I have done no wickedness.’*” In my Bible notes, Agur says that “an adulterous woman thinks sex is casual and moral and equates this to just a meal.”

24. What are the consequences to our personal sins?

25. Do you think our sins affect just us? Or do they have consequences for others also?

This is a saying I learned many years ago in Bible study: “Sin is like a snowball rolling down a steep hill—it takes you farther than you wanted to go, it keeps you longer than you wanted to stay, and it costs you (and others) more than you wanted to pay.”

26. Read Proverbs 30:21-23. What are the four unbearable things?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

27. Read Proverbs 30:24-28. What are the four things that are little on earth but exceedingly wise?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

28. Read Proverbs 30:29-31. What are the four things which are majestic and stately in walk?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.



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Please read our last section, Proverbs 30:32-33--Agur's Warning

29. What is Agur warning us about?

30. When we exalt ourselves, how is this dishonoring God?

Putting our hand over our mouth in the middle of speaking is to immediately stop ourselves out of fear of what might come out.

31. Refer to the beginning of our chapter, verses 2-6. Recap what Agur is speaking about in these verses.

Proverbs 31:1-7--The wisdom of a mother to her son.

We are now introduced to King Lemuel. In these nine verses, he recounts the wisdom his mother taught him. Once again, there is speculation that King Lemuel could be another name for King Solomon, which would mean this wisdom came from his mother Bathsheba, but God does not refer to this king as Lemuel and his mother, who is not identified by name. So let us focus on what we can learn from these nine verses.

Remember the word **utterance**, which we defined at the beginning of our study? It means *a prophesy or revelation from God.*”

Proverbs 31:1-2 says, “*The words of King Lemuel, the utterance which his mother taught him. What my son? And what, son of my womb? And what, son of my vows?*”

32. Define a **biblical vow** as used in this manner.

33. Who is speaking in the following verses, and who is their son?

- 1 Samuel 1:11
- 2 Timothy 1:5-7



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34. List other mothers you know in the Bible who believed and trusted God.

Proverbs 31:3 is a warning. *“Do not give your strength to women nor your ways to that which destroys kings.”*

35. How did the men in the following verses give their strength to a woman and how did it destroy them?

- Deuteronomy 17:17
- 1 Kings 11:1-10
- 2 Samuel 11-12
- Judges 16:15-17

Proverbs 31:3 is a warning of sexual immorality, which leads to loss of spiritual strength, self-respect, self-control, and loss of respect from your family and community. This warning is not just for men, it is for women as well.

Read Proverbs 31:4-7.

36. What is King Lemuel’s mother warning him against in these verses?

37. How many times does she warn against drinking alcohol?

38. What does alcohol do to our perception and judgment?

Intoxicants take away from a person’s performance, rational thinking, and reactions. The warning against alcohol in this passage is specific to those in leadership but really applies to all. We may not be a queen (although I think we all are), but we are all in some sort of “leadership” position, whether we are in women’s leadership, a mother, in our workplace, or in God’s kingdom. People are watching and judging us, and it is up to us to be clear-minded and well-spoken.

39. Define **overindulgence**.



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Read Ecclesiastes 10:16-17.

40. Can the two things that King Lemuel's mother warned him about have the same effect? Why?

41. Read Proverbs 31:6-7 with Matthew 27:34. Why was alcohol offered to the dying?

In reference to Proverbs 31:7, Spurgeon's commentary states, "If any man should be wicked enough to draw from it the inference that he would be able to forget his misery and poverty by drinking, he would soon find himself woefully mistaken, for if he had one misery before he would have ten miseries afterward, and if he was previously poor, he would be in still greater poverty afterward. Those who fly to the bottle for consolation might as soon fly to hell to find a heaven, and instead be helping them to forget their poverty, drunkenness would only sink them still more deeply in the mire."

Proverbs 31:8-9—Defending the Defenseless

42. What does Psalm 82:3-5 say about helping others?

43. What does Isaiah 1:17 say?

When you have the ability and opportunity to help someone, it is essential that you do so. You can't solve everyone's problems, but you can be positive, compassionate, and loving. A simple gesture of a smile, a kind word, mailing a card, or sending a text can be just what someone needs. There are opportunities in our community and our church that you could ask about and volunteer to do.

A few years ago, I was joined by four other Christian women, so there were five of us in a group called the "Stretcher Bearers." The purpose of the group is that any time one of us would need to be symbolically carried on the stretcher by the other four, we would uplift each other in prayer, give words of encouragement, and just be there for each other. I would encourage you to get a group of ladies together that you also can reach out to when you need that extra help.

44. We have reached the end of our study this week of Proverbs 30:1-31:9. What has been most meaningful to you, and how has God changed you this week?