

Lesson 503 – The Quirkiest Chapter in the Bible

THEME: Let's give an introduction to the book of Ecclesiastes by first examining a bit about it's author.

TEXT: Proverbs 30

INTRODUCTION:

Proverbs 30

1 The words of **Agur** the son of **Jakeh**, even the prophecy: the man spake unto **Ithiel**, even unto **Ithiel** and **Ucal**,

2 Surely I am more **brutish** than any man, and have not the understanding of a man.

3 I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy.

4 Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?

5 Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

6 Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.

7 Two things have I required of thee; deny me them not before I die:

8 Remove far from me **vanity** and **lies**: give me neither **poverty** nor **riches**; feed me with food **convenient** for me:

9 Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.

10 Accuse not a servant unto his master, lest he curse thee, and thou be found guilty.

11 **There is a generation** that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother.

12 **There is a generation** that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness.

13 **There is a generation**, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up.

14 **There is a generation**, whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men.

15 The horseleach hath two daughters, crying, Give, give.

There are **three things that are never satisfied**, yea, four things say not, It is enough:

16 The grave; and the barren womb; the earth that is not filled with water; and the fire that saith not, It is enough.

17 The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.

18 There be **three things which are too wonderful for me**, yea, four which I know not:

19 The way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a maid.

20 Such is the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness.

21 For **three things the earth is disquieted**, and for four which it cannot bear:
22 For a servant when he reigneth; and a fool when he is filled with meat;
23 For an odious woman when she is married; and an handmaid that is heir to her mistress.

24 There be **four things which are little upon the earth**, but they are exceeding wise:

25 The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer;
26 The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks;
27 The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands;
28 The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces.

29 There be **three things which go well**, yea, four are comely in going:

30 A lion which is strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any;
31 A greyhound; an he goat also; and a king, against whom there is no rising up.
32 If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, lay thine hand upon thy mouth.

33 Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter, and the wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood: so the forcing of wrath bringeth forth strife.

If there's one quirk chapter in the Bible, it would be **Proverbs 30**. It's a freak-strange chapter because the flow of wisdom is completely interrupted by a 'Brutish' (stupid) man who claims to lack wisdom.

His name is **AGUR**.

LESSON:

WHO IS AGUR?!?

- **Agur** – Gathered; a gatherer
- **Jakeh** – He shall be cleared; He will be obedient
- **Ithiel** – God is with me (Rehoboam - A people has enlarged ???)
- **Ucal** – I shall be completed/enabled; Strong (Jeroboam – People will contend ???)

So, WHO is **AGUR**?!? Did you know this name is only mentioned in ONE PLACE in the Scriptures, as well as **Jakeh**, **Ithiel**, and **Ucal**?

There is some speculation that **Agur** is **Solomon**, speaking words of wisdom to his two heir-apparents, **Rehoboam** and his son **Jeroboam**.

- **Rehoboam**, of course, was a mighty and strong man who Nathan the prophet annointed as the next king in line to inherit 10 tribes of Israel, and to divide the nation.
- **Jeroboam**, Solomon's own son and next in line to the kingdom, would be king over nothing, save for God's mercy and promise to King David in establishing his throne forever.

But when we consider the meanings of these once-used names, they do not seem to apply to this particular interpretation.

- **REHOBAM** = A people has enlarged
- **UCAL** = I shall be completed/enabled; strong

The only part of this interpretation that DOES seem to make sense is that **AGUR** is a self-ascribed nickname of **King Solomon**.

ILL – It is common understanding that you don't really get to pick your nicknames. Other people pick your nicknames, usually biased upon an oft-manifested trait or character quirk.

But Solomon grew up with nicknames. It started with this kid when he was BORN!

- David called him **Jedidiah** – *The darling, the Beloved*
- His mother, Bathsheba, called him **Lemuel** – *Belonging to God; God with him*
- Yet, God called him (**Solomon** – *Beloved of God*)

2 Samuel 12

24 And David comforted **Bathsheba** his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name **Solomon**: and the LORD loved him.

Solomon grew up with many names used to describe him. As the youngest of David's children, and the only surviving child of the controversial **David/Bathsheba marriage**, it must have been quite a unique and different relationship.

CONSIDER THIS: King David was a man after God's own heart. Yet, when it came to fatherhood, he... like most of us dads, fell far short of perfection. It's interesting to me that, as a bloody man, and a man of war, there seemed to be little time for the upbringing of:

Amnon (David's 1st born) = *Faithful and True*

Chileab (2nd Born and from Abigail – the beautiful wife of the deceased churlish man Nabal) = *Sustained of My Father*

Absolom (3rd Born his wife Maacah (*Oppression*)) = *Father of Peace*

The fact that Solomon had so many nicknames, and none of his other brothers did seems to stand out to me. They say that the youngest is always spoiled, but if you also consider that by THIS TIME, David's enemies were put down and David may have ACTUALLY had time to spend with Solomon, things might take a different perspective.

David's heart was to build a temple unto God... Now, where did Solomon pick up this passion?

Solomon also gives nicknames to himself. The very next book is **Ecclesiastes** -

- **Preacher** = *Assembler*
- **AGUR** = Gatherer

Solomon was quite the talk of History. Can you guess the **THREE W's Solomon** was most noted for?

- Wisdom
- Wealth
- Women

Smith's Bible Dictionary had this to say about Solomon:

Sol'omon (*peaceful*). I. Early life and occasion to the throne. -- **Solomon** was the child of **David's** old age, the last born of all his sons. **1 Chronicles 3:5**. The yearnings of the "man of war" led him to give to the new-born infant, the name of **Solomon** (*Shelomoth, the peaceful one*). **Nathan**, with a marked reference to the meaning of the king's own name (**David**, the darling, the beloved one), calls the infant **Jedidiah**, (Jedid'yah), that is, the darling of the Lord. **2 Samuel 11:24-25**. He was placed under the care of Nathan from his earliest infancy.

At first, apparently, there was no distinct purpose to make him the heir. **Absalom** was still the king's favorite son, **2 Samuel 13:37; 18:33**, and was looked on, by the people, as the destined successor. **14:13; 15:1-6**. The death of **Absalom**, when **Solomon** was about ten years old, left the place vacant, and **David** pledged his word, in secret, to **Bath-sheba** that he, and no other, should be the heir. **1 Kings 1:13**. The words which were spoken somewhat later express, doubtless, the purpose which guided him throughout. **1 Chronicles 28:9; 20**.

His son's life should not be, as his own had been, one of hardships and wars, dark crimes, and passionate repentance, but, from first to last, be pure, blameless, peaceful, fulfilling the ideal of glory and of righteousness, after which he himself had vainly striven. The glorious visions of **Psalms 72:1**, may be looked on as the prophetic expansion of these hopes of his old age. So far, all was well.

Apparently his influence over his son's character was one exclusively for good. Nothing that we know of **Bath-sheba** lends us to think of her as likely to mould her son's mind and heart, to the higher forms of goodness. Under these influences, the boy grew up.

KEY THOUGHT: **Solomon**, as a young man, was approached by God who offered Him anything. Do you remember what thing Solomon most desired?

1 Kings 3

5, In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, **Ask what I shall give thee**.

6, And Solomon said, Thou hast shewed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day.

7, And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in.

8, And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.

9, Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?

1 Kings 4

29 And God gave **Solomon WISDOM** and **UNDERSTANDING** exceeding much, and **LARGENESS OF HEART**, even as the sand that is on the sea shore.

30 And **Solomon's wisdom** excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt.

31 For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about.

32 And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five.

CLOSING:

It's passages like these that lead me to believe that **Solomon** wrote **Proverbs 30** to... himself, on behalf of his credited father, **David**, whom he refers to as **Jakeh**.

Flip over with me to **Psalms 73**:

Psalms 73

1 Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.

2 But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.

3 For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

4 For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm.

5 They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men.

6 Therefore **pride compasseth them about as a chain**; violence covereth them as a garment.

7 **Their eyes stand out with fatness**: they have more than heart could wish.

8 They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: **they speak loftily**.

9 They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.

10 Therefore his people return hither: and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them.

11 And they say, **How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High?**

12 Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.

13 Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.

14 For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.

15 If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children.

16 When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me;

17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.

18 Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction.

19 How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.

20 **As a dream** when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.

21 Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins.

22 **So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee.**

23 Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand.

24 Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.

25 Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.

26 My flesh and my heart faileth: but **God is the strength of my heart**, and **my portion for ever**.

27 For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee.

28 But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works.

With the influence of THIS side of the heart of David, is it any wonder that Solomon closes out his 'Book of Wisdom' with credits to both his **father** (*Proverbs 30*) and his **mother** (*Proverbs 31*)?

Exodus 20

12 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Deuteronomy 5

16 Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.