

The Proverbs of Solomon – Proverbs 30:24-28

As I said last week, our proverbist, is now in the midst of giving us groups of related thoughts. And just as we have skipped over many of Solomon's proverbs, we won't look at all of these. Our verses tonight bring me back to my childhood, when I loved collecting creepy-crawly things. Job once said, *"Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee."* Tell us what Job? They teach us about their Creator, and they teach us about our responsibilities as God's children.

Let's consider what Agur says about these creatures, and then we'll transition to a very easy spiritual application.

Exposition:

Verse 24 – *"There be four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise."* In this case, *"wisdom"* is not referring **directly** to our salvation or to our Saviour who gives us salvation. These four little creatures are wise in **earthly** areas – areas where the Lord intended them to be wise.

There is a tendency, growing out of our pride, to think that since we are wiser in some area than another person, we are more wise – or better – than that person in a general sense. But that just may not be the case, and there is always someone wiser in some things than we are. Someone knows more about auto mechanics, or accounting, or astrophysics than you do.

Some time ago I sent Judy a link to a news video of an elderly man suffering from cerebral palsy. For 60 years or more he had been suffering from this debilitating affliction, unable to speak well, unable to do anything quickly unable to live on his own; unable to get a job; unable to function in *"ordinary"* society. But one day someone gave him an old manual typewriter, and he learned to peck on it with a single, difficult-to-control finger. Today, he uses that machine to create beautiful works of art – landscapes, portraits, animals. Among other things, he has accurately replicated the Mona Lisa and other well-known works of art. He is amazing, even though he can hardly speak and his movements are spasmodic.

Just because someone or some things are little when compared to the standards of the world, it doesn't mean they don't possess their own excellencies. Furthermore, just because someone or something is considered little *"upon the EARTH,"* it doesn't mean they are considered little in the sight of God.

For example, *"the ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer"* – **verse 25**. There are some pretty big – huge – ants in the world, but they don't live around here. The ants which periodically plague the church and come into my house are minuscule. They can be squashed by the dozens with a single well-placed shoe – they are *"a people not strong."* But they are smart enough and industrious enough to use their short lives to prepare for winter and for their children and grandchildren.

The word *"meat"* in the Bible usually means simply *"food"* and it does so in this case.

The lion – the king of beasts – often gets hungry, going for days without the opportunity to catch any food. But not so the ant; there is always something for him, even when the grass turns to tinder.

And how big is the brain of those little ants we have coming into our houses? Microscopic? Well then, from where, or from Whom, did they get their wisdom? Their brains? Evolution? Don't be silly. They were **created** with the ability to work, to plan ahead, and to cope with winter and drought. *"Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise."*

Verse 26 – *"The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks."* The coney is a rodent, larger than a mouse, but smaller than a rabbit. There are varieties all over the world. Locally, I suppose that our marmots would be cousins to conies.

When we first moved to Post Falls, there were marmots living at Falls Park in amongst the rocks along the old Corbin irrigation ditch. They could also be seen at several other rocky places around town. It's been years since I've seen any marmots, but there might be some over on the Quemlin side of the river. It's safe to say they are a feeble folk. Their lives are in constant danger – from traps if nothing else.

By the way, *"folk"* in **verse 26** and *"people"* in **verse 25** is the same Hebrew word, and it is most often translated *"people"* followed by *"nation."*

Generally, conies are an *"at-risk people"* who survive using their God-given wisdom to live in rocky areas. Yes, I can see them adapting to that kind of habitat. And yes, they are similar to gophers and groundhogs who live out in the prairies, but I can clearly see the Creator giving the coney wisdom to live amongst the rocks.

Verse 27 – *"The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands."* When my family lived in Omaha, NE, we would take two week vacations in the Black Hills of western S.D. The Black Hills are the closest things to mountains and camping we could reach from eastern Nebraska. I remember one year when I was 8 or 9, Nebraska

was infested with locusts. The one night we had to spend before reaching our destination was so covered with hoppers that we couldn't step without squashing a few. It was disgusting even to a bug-loving kid like me. We may not like or enjoy locusts, but God loves them as much as He does eagles and white horses. And He has used them for His glory on several occasions.

Jehovah has sent swarms of locusts from one place to another, usually as judgment for sin. Those creatures by the millions/billions still yet today, arise and move as an army from place to place. And there are armies of scientists and foot soldiers who are unsuccessfully fighting them. Locusts don't have a king or queen, the way that bees and some other creatures do, but they have a God. *"The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands"* to wherever the Lord sends them.

And **verse 28** – *"The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces."* What is the meaning of this reference to *"taking hold with her hands?"* I noticed that some of my theologians wanted to talk about the spider using her hands to weave her web. I'm not so sure that is biologically accurate; and if so, then it isn't what the Holy Spirit is saying. I'm thinking of something more simple – when a spider wants to move into your palace, she just walks in using her hands and feet (is there really a difference when it comes to spiders)? *"The spider taketh hold with her hands, and* (hangs from the ceiling) *in kings' palaces."*

It may not mean much to you, but I am very pleased my Bible speaks of the spider with a feminine pronoun. From my limited education, I seem to remember that nearly every spider you see is female. The males don't live very long – often with the help of the female. Notice also that Agur's other creatures are all in families and groups, but not the spider. He simply says, it is very difficult – it may be impossible – to keep those single, singular spiders from visiting the inside of your house.

Now, consider with me some application of these things.

First, when it comes to the admiration of others, size and individual strength should not be overly considered. *"The ants are a people not STRONG; the conies are but a FEEBLE folk... There be four things which are LITTLE upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise."* When I was in Bible school, there were visiting preachers who pastored huge or growing churches. They were set forth as examples; they were revered; they were praised to high heaven – literally. But for every one of them were a dozen little people who were perhaps greater servants of God than the great. The faithful Sunday School teacher may lead more people to Christ than the well-known preacher. The layman who is on fire for the Lord, may be more important to a church than the pastor. That prayerful widow, who can hardly get to church because of arthritis, may have great power with God. Even that recently saved teenager, who is not strong in doctrine, may be exceedingly wise in her love of God and in her testimony of Christ.

Second, when it comes to the admiration of others, we should consider the **source** of that person's wisdom. Where did that coney, or spider, or ant get her wisdom? From their Creator. Let's not join the secular evolutionist, praising the ant or the locust, forgetting the Lord who created them. Let's put the credit where the credit is due. Wisdom is a gift from God, wisely developed by through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Now, let's see if we can bring together these four feeble creatures into one illustration. *"There be four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise."* What is the wisest creature upon the face of the earth? Isn't it the child of God? And how did that former foolish sinner become a child of God? By the miracle of God's saving grace. *"The conies are but a feeble folk, yet* (with the wisdom of God) *they make they their houses in the rocks."* Jesus said in **Matthew 7:24** – *"Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built* (the house of his salvation) *upon a rock: And the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock."* I may be nothing but a feeble coney, but I can tell you right now that my house is built on Christ the rock. He *"is my rock and my salvation; he is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved"* – **Psalm 62:2**. I may be nothing more than a disgusting little spider, but I have a mansion prepared for me by the Lord Jesus in the palace of the King of kings. *"A day in (God's) courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper* (or a spider) *in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness"* – **Psalm 84:10**.

How is it that the locusts have no king and yet they go forth as a unified army? While they have no human king, or no locust king, they have a God who is the King of kings. You might say those locusts can be located in the churches of Christ. And from there off they swarm out to take the gospel to Jerusalem and to uttermost part of the earth – and to the Spokane Reservation. They pool their resources, and their energies, and their prayers for the work of the Lord as He directs. Even though they are many and diverse, in the Lord's church they are united to do the Lord's work.

And *“the ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer.”* Who and what is Calvary Independent Baptist Church? It’s a feeble group of a little more than a dozen Christians – ants, conies, despised locusts – who have covenanted together to obey and serve the Lord. Satan could squash and silence us so easily, but we have made our house amidst the rocks of Biblical doctrine, and whenever the enemy comes close we scurry back into our place of safety – the Word of God. But then at every opportunity we run out to take advantage of the summer and the daylight to prepare our meat for the feast of the Lord’s return. *“The night is far spent, the day is at hand: so we cast off the works of darkness, and ... put on the armour of light. Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.”*

I think these verses from Agur could be used to encourage the people of the Lord in their service for Christ. We are nothing and nobodies, but *“we can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us.”* We just need to make sure we stay protected, hiding in the Lord’s will for us, while carrying out the work for which the Lord saved us.