

A Remarkable Confession and Prophecy (the words of Agur, the son of Jakeh)

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“The words of Agur, the son of Jakeh, even the prophecy; the man spake unto Ithiel and Ucal” (Proverbs 30:14)

Agur and Jakeh are thought by some to be symbolical names for Solomon, and Agur is said by others to mean *gathered*, or *received*, as from sages, and that Jakeh means, most probably, to *hearken* or to *obey*. Accepting this and putting these thoughts together we may apply them thus. We should be gatherers or willing receivers of the mind of God and be in readiness to obey, to carry out fully that which we learn.

God has given us His word, His communications, and it is for us to gather up what He has been pleased to reveal. Earnestly should we seek therefore to be acquainted with all that which He has spread for us in the Scriptures.

Of the animals it is said, “These wait all upon Thee: that Thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That Thou givest them they gather. Thou openest Thy hand, they are filled with good. Thou givest . . . they gather; they are filled.” No premium is put upon laziness in the animal creation. Activity is called for. And thus spiritually “Giving all diligence,” we are to add. Thus growing by the knowledge of God we may learn how to walk in obedience “worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing,” and to be fruitful in our pathway.

It may be that Ithiel, to whom Agur speaks, may tell us by his name that he is one to whom “God is,” or to whom “God has arrived.” “God is,” the Ever-Existing I AM – and to us who believe He has come. In these Christian days He has revealed Himself in Christ. *Emmanuel*, God with us, tells the story of His grace, as He tabernacled in our midst. “And we know that the Son of God has come and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true” (1. John 5:20).

Now it was in the light of the presence of God that Agur the gatherer had learned himself and thus it is that he makes the remarkable confession,

“Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy” (Prov 30:3)

“More brutish than any man.” What a statement! In what way he had learned his state we are not told. How far he had discovered the evil of “the flesh” within him, we know not. But in God’s light he saw light and takes the lowest place among his fellows. This was the same spirit which marked the apostle Paul, who could say, he was “least of the apostles,” “less than the least of all saints,” and “chief of sinners.” It was he who had fully learned the terrible condition in which fallen man is found and who exclaimed, “I am carnal, sold under sin; who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Again, Agur’s words are like those of the Psalmist who, after his period of wandering, said, “Then I was brutish and knew nothing. I was as a beast (a dumb beast) before Thee.” Foolishness and ignorance had marked him. He had been dumb in his insensate judgment of God (Ps 73:22).

Here Agur compares himself to his own disadvantage, with all others. He speaks of himself as stupidity personified. Each of us must come to self-condemnation in some similar way, and to own “In me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing,” for “the flesh profiteth nothing; the

mind of the flesh is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be, so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”

Happy are we when we believe and enter into the joy of the words that follow; “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you” (Rom 8:9).

“*And have not the understanding of a man,*” Agur adds. That which was proper to a man was not his, was his feeling. Was he conscious that he was part of a fallen race? we may ask. Did he know that Adam forfeited this “understanding” by his sin and plunged all his seed into a state of darkness, “Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their hearts” (Eph 4:18)?

At any rate Agur is aware that he has not the intelligence suitable to man’s position. And continuing he says, “*I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy.*” His whole course had been stamped by folly and unholiness. Thus in true self-condemnation he makes his confession, lying, as it were, on his face in the dust of his sinfulness before God.

Then it is that the Spirit of God turns his thoughts away from himself to engage him with God and with His Son. Then it is that he utters a remarkable prophecy concerning Christ, and what He has done.

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 knowest?

Blessed indeed it is, when we have felt “weary of self and laden with our sin,” to have our eyes directed by the Holy Ghost to Him who is “the Man of God’s right hand, the Son of Man” whom He “has made strong for Himself.”

Let us examine briefly this remarkable prophecy – “Who hath ascended up to heaven or descended?” Was not this verse in the mind of the apostle Paul when he wrote Ephesians 4:9? Our Lord Jesus first “descended” to accomplish the will of God and to obtain eternal redemption for us, having suffered for us, “the Just for the unjust to bring us to God.” He has now “ascended up to heaven” and is seated at the right hand of God. He, the last Adam, has become our Head. From Him blessing in its fullness flows. For ever now we are linked up with Him, He is our Saviour. But more than that He is our Life. “God manifest in flesh.” He has met our every need, and laid low our every foe. And in His death He has brought to an end all that we were in our “brutish” condition, as bound up with Adam “the man of sin and shame,” so that we might now “live unto God” in the sunshine of His eternal favour, in the acceptance of Christ.

The three questions which follow lead our thoughts to Him Who made all and maintains all. The winds and the waters and the ends of the earth are controlled by His power. All creation exists through Him and subsists in Him. The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork” (Ps 19). “Lo, these are parts of His ways: but how little a

portion is heard of Him? (*what a whisper of a word do we hear of Him*). But the thunder of His power who can understand?" (Job 26:14).

His eternal power and His Godhead are seen in the works of His hands. His Almightyness in creation and in providence. This greatness and glory might and should appal if we had only this "whisper of a word of Him" in His creation. But He has revealed Himself now and fully, for though "No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John 1:18).

To Abraham He made Himself known as Almighty. To Israel He was declared as Jehovah, 'I am that I am.' But the full revelation was reserved for these later days. "The Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost," are known in Christianity. Thus no longer is He "the Unknown God." No longer does He dwell in thick darkness. He is in the light of manifestation. Privileged is our lot. No more to ask what is His name? All that He is has been expressed in the beloved Son for our delight, that we may walk before Him in the light of His countenance and find our joy in holy relationship with Him as children.

"What is His Son's name?" A truly remarkable enquiry surely. Is there not a clear prophecy here of Him who was to come, the Son sent by the Father, to be the Saviour of the world. Of Him Psalm 2:12 had spoken, "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way . . . Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

His Name we know, "Jesus, is the Son of God." That name, so sweet to us, carries with it His Godhead glory. For it means JEHOVAH THE SAVIOUR, "EMMANUEL. . . God with us."

Happy indeed to know it! Happy indeed to "tell" it, to be allowed to be vessels, however small, to bear that name to others.

"And to the weary heart proclaim Behold the Lamb of God."

It is with Him we are linked up now and for ever. The "brutish" man has been judged in the death of Christ and ended there. And Christ is our life, beyond death and condemnation. We are "in Him" and soon to be with Him and for His glory conformed to His image "that He may be firstborn among many brethren."

Scripture Truth, 1932, p. 280