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Day 145 – May 25

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## **Israel as a Monarchy (1100 – 930 BCE)**

### ***Various Observations***

### ***Sayings of Agur***

### ***Sayings of King Lemuel***

### ***The Wife of Noble Character***

#### **Readings: *Proverbs***

By Topic:

Various Observations:

- Joy and Grief – 14L10, 13; 15:13; 17:22; 18:14; 25:20; 27:11; 29:6
- Good News – 15:30; 23:25
- Curiosity – 27:20
- Sayings of Agur – 30:1-33
- Sayings of King Lemuel – 31:1-9
- Wife of Noble Character – 31:10-31

#### ***Reflections:***

- These first sections follow the pattern of wisdom literature and are well worth careful reflection. Two specific people are mentioned in Agur and King Lemuel. No doubt these sayings had been embraced by Israel as God- inspired wisdom and so they are captured here with Solomon.
- Agur’s reflection on God’s limitless power fits well with the Old Testament. His final question obviously catches the eye of a Christ follower: “What is his name and the name of his son? Tell me if you know!”
- For anyone waiting for God to do something new in a difficult situation, Agur’s teaching on daily bread is insightful. “Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, “Who is the Lord?” Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of the Lord.” God’s

ultimate goal for us is being completely secure in him and resting in a deep faith relationship. His providing our daily bread is what keeps us actively engaged and dependent on him. Great miracles do not produce lasting faith but looking for and accepting daily bread does. Over time we are able to see how God provides just what we need when we need it.

- The sayings of King Lemuel reflect again the critical importance of caring for the poor and powerless. A king has all the power and wealth he needs to live a life of comfort and luxury and yet here in Scripture we see one king challenging all other kings to reject a life of luxury and to embrace a life of radical service to the poor and maintaining true justice.
- The wife of noble character is well-known in Scripture and many have wished that it would have a counter-part, the husband of noble character. In a sense, the best place to find this counter-part is to study the life of Christ. Paul (Ephesians 5) sets the pattern for a noble husband as one who serves like Christ. With this said, the attributes of a noble spouse reflect true other-centeredness and hard work. Here again we see a concern for the poor and disadvantaged. The culminating quality is simply this: fear of the Lord. All of the preceding character qualities are ultimately rooted in a deep love and faith-filled relationship with God. Likewise we discover in Christ that it is God's power to change us from the inside out that enables us to walk worthy of the high calling we have received in Christ. See Ephesians 3:19-4:1.