

Eternal PERSPECTIVE Proverbs

BIBLE TEXT | PROVERBS 30:21-33

21 Under three things the earth trembles; under four it cannot bear up:

22 a slave when he becomes king, and a fool when he is filled with food;

23 an unloved woman when she gets a husband, and a maidservant when she displaces her mistress.

24 Four things on earth are small, but they are exceedingly wise:

25 the ants are a people not strong, yet they provide their food in the summer;

26 the rock badgers are a people not mighty, yet they make their homes in the cliffs;

27 the locusts have no king, yet all of them march in rank;

28 the lizard you can take in your hands, yet it is in kings' palaces.

29 Three things are stately in their tread; four are stately in their stride:

30 the lion, which is mightiest among beasts and does not turn back before any;

31 the strutting rooster, the he-goat, and a king whose army is with him.

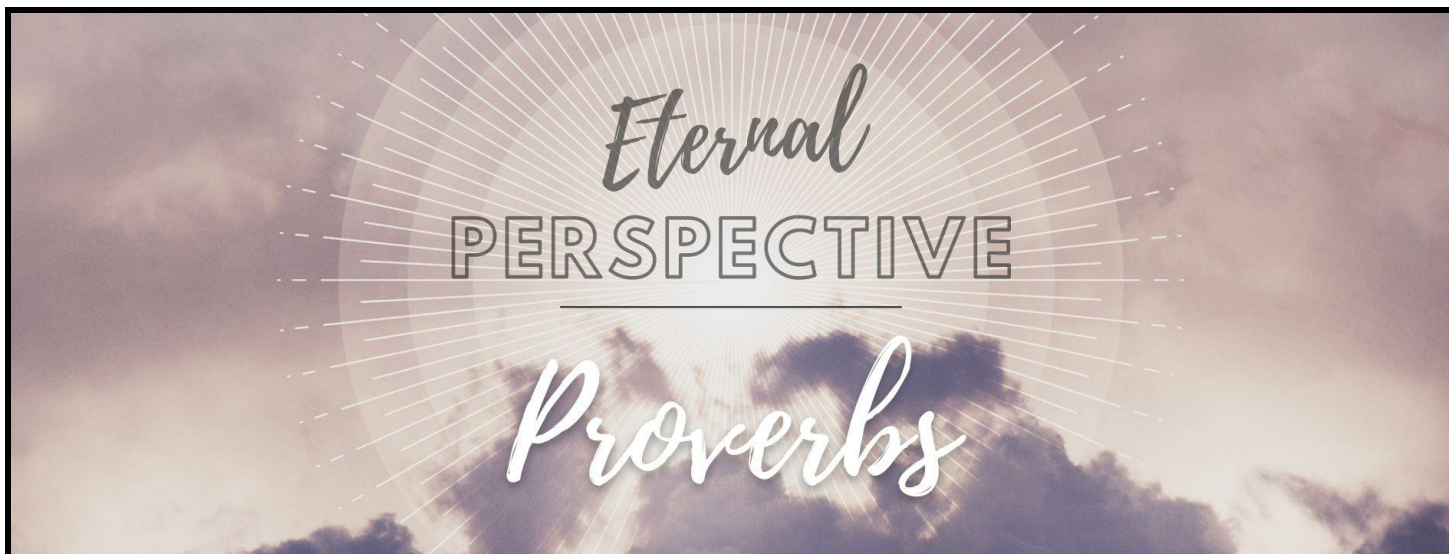
32 If you have been foolish, exalting yourself, or if you have been devising evil, put your hand on your mouth.

33 For pressing milk produces curds, pressing the nose produces blood, and pressing anger produces strife.

DEVOTIONAL FOR PROVERBS 30:21-33

AUTHOR: KELLI BRYANT

When I was assigned this devotional months ago, I was excited because I remembered that we had a series that covered these verses a few years ago. Then life does what it always does, and I got busy and distracted and forgot about doing this devotional until I received a text that it was late. As a teacher, I am always happy to receive late work because I understand that life happens and even our little ones need forgiveness when they miss their deadlines. I don't often give myself that same type of grace. After I got the text, I started doing some research, and the next day I had a 102.5 fever, which slowed down my research even more. When I finally sat down to start working on this devotional, I went back to look at the series we had on this and was shocked to discover that these few verses were



covered over five Sundays. It's no wonder that I remembered covering these verses, because we had spent a significant amount of time on them. I knew immediately that I was going to have to narrow down my focus greatly.

Two years ago, we delved into Proverbs during the "Hindsight is 20/20" series; the lesson over Proverbs 30:24-28 was called "Perseverance through Peril" (https://youtu.be/MXn_tdYI27A?si=Gl7YYpjXpxYqbTor). I highly encourage you to go back and listen to this lesson. It's just as powerful today as it was then.

"Four things on earth are small, but they are exceedingly wise:" (Proverbs 30:24). This section opens with telling us about four small things on earth whose smarts far exceed their size. These four (the ant, rock badger, locusts, and lizards) are all creatures that work well together for their community and for the common good. This is ultimately what we are called to do, to look out for one another and share our love of the Lord.

Verse 25 tells us that ants are not strong, but they gather their food during the summer. As we approach fall, I've enjoyed watching the squirrels gather pecans from our front yard. Besides watching the weather forecasters, looking at the Old Farmers Almanac, and checking out the persimmons, I always can gauge if our winter is going to be colder by the number of pecans that are on the driveway. There are not many pecans on my driveway this year because the squirrels and other animals are taking as many back to hide away as possible.

Although ants are small, literally overnight a massive fire ant mound can appear out of nowhere. They work together and achieve great things by all applying their focus to achieving a goal. We see many examples in the Bible of how, through working together, amazing things have been built. There are historic sites in Israel, Palestine, Jordan, and Lebanon that have withstood thousands of years of turmoil to tell the story of Christianity. These places are once again in danger of loss and the entire area is in need of our prayers.

There's no discounting the value of the prayers of one individual, but the prayers of many can bring about great change. Like the small creatures mentioned in today's reading, when we apply ourselves, work together, and pray together, great things can be achieved for the good of our communities and throughout the world.

Questions:

1. When was the last time you shared the Lord with someone?
2. When was the last time you asked for someone to pray for you?
3. When was the last time you prayed with a group of people for an issue facing your community?