

FOUR MIDGETS ... and their secret of strength  
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(PROVERBS 30:24-28)

King Solomon was a very observant man, who in spite of the details of state business still found time to study the ways of Nature. He whom God had made wise, easily recognized wisdom in others ; and it was this fact which led him to write, " There be four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise: the ants . . . the conies . . . the locusts . . . the spider." Are we justified in thinking that here is a progression of thought which reminds of loftier things?

#### The Unsurpassed Foresight

" The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer." Ants love sunshine, and on a warm day these underground dwellers swarm through their tiny tunnels in search of food. When one of these creatures discovers a treasure, the news is communicated to the rest of the colony, and immediately every able-bodied creature hastens to help transport the " find " to the underground granary. When the warmth of the sunshine begins to disappear, the ants return to their home, and all through the bleak days of winter they remain hidden. The great Creator has endowed them with superlative wisdom. Recognizing their own insufficiency, they correctly assess their need and adequately prepare for the future. There are many other features about these tiny people which humans could well emulate. It is easy to understand why the Bible says, " Go to the ant, thou sluggard." Men are also in great need, and are not capable of withstanding eternal storms. It behoves them to prepare in summer-the day of opportunity-what they will need in future days.

#### The Unique Fortress

"The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks." It is doubtful whether one could find conies anywhere except in rocks. These timid creatures have no weapons with which to fight, and therefore they seek shelter in the strongholds of nature. High on the cliffs between Capetown and Port Elizabeth in South Africa, these creatures may be seen playing in the sunshine. Yet in order to approach them, the onlooker must move slowly and quietly. The least sound is sufficient to alarm the animals, and instantly they are on the alert. A rabbit burrows into the soft earth, but the conies love rocks in the most inaccessible positions. It would be impossible to dig them out of their impregnable fortress. They seem to be wiser than men, who have more confidence in their own sufficiency than they have in the Rock of Ages.

#### The Undivided Fellowship

" The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands." Isolated locusts present no dangers to the farmer. " United they stand: divided they fall." A swarm of locusts is something to be feared. In their millions they appear on the horizon, and their passing suggests the drone of a great aeroplane. In Central Africa and elsewhere in the world these innumerable pests sometimes obliterate the sun. Their coming represents a major disaster, and vast sums of money are spent annually in the attempt to annihilate this menace. The locusts have no leader, but as long as they stay together they represent a striking force which makes men fear. Alas,

FOUR MIDGETS ... and their secret of strength they might be our school masters. The fellowship of saints should be the greatest thing in the world. The Bible speaks of the oneness of the Body of Christ, but in actual experience assemblies and individuals isolate themselves from other Christians. They divide the family of God, and substitute impotence for power. All true Christians value the fellowship of other believers. Real saints are never hermits nor spiritual tramps!

#### The Undaunted Fortitude

"The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in king's palaces." Obviously King Solomon knew this to be true. Probably he had often destroyed a spider's web, only to find that another soon appeared in its place. The spider's motto seems to be, " If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." This courageous spirit has been invincible during the ages. The very existence of the spider depends upon its ability to overcome persecution. Its magnificent fortitude has conquered kingdoms. No military guard can subjugate it, and even the greatest watchfulness is not a guarantee against the spider's coming. The hunted creature takes hold anywhere in order to weave a web. We are reminded of the words of Christ: " No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." These ancient midgets can teach all who are not too old to learn.

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