

Question:

Can you help me understand the meaning of Proverbs 30:32-33 (NIV), which says:

Proverbs 30:32:

“If you play the fool and exalt yourself, or if you plan evil, clap your hand over your mouth.”

Proverbs 30:33:

“For as churning milk produces butter, and as twisting the nose produces blood, so stirring up anger produces strife.”

Answer:

This passage, from the Book of Proverbs, teaches us that every action, whether good or bad, results in a specific outcome. The author uses simple examples to make this clear.

In Proverbs 30:33, we see an analogy with milk and butter. Milk naturally contains butter, but to extract the butter, the milk needs

to be churned. This action of churning separates the butter from the milk. The same principle applies to our actions: what’s inside will eventually show, but it often requires a trigger or action to bring it out.

Similarly, blood is inside your nose, but it doesn’t come out unless the nose is disturbed. For example, if you’re punched in the nose, blood will come out. The point is that blood is there, but it needs an external force to make it flow.

The passage applies this idea to anger and conflict. Anger is something that can be inside of us, like butter in milk or blood in the nose. But for anger to turn into conflict, it needs to be stirred up, provoked, or triggered.

The wisdom in Proverbs 30:32 warns that when you feel anger rising, especially when you’re about to say something hurtful, you should immediately “put your hand over your mouth”—meaning, stop talking. If you continue to speak when you’re angry, the result will likely be an argument, fighting, or harm.

In fact, many negative outcomes—such as violence, revenge, or hatred—are often the result of anger that was stirred up and not

controlled.

But here’s the good news: the ability to control our emotions, especially anger, comes through being in Christ. The Bible teaches that with God’s help, we can have the strength to control our reactions and choose peace instead of conflict.

If you haven’t trusted in Christ yet, and you’re ready to receive Him today, feel free to reach out to us using the contact information below.

May God bless you.

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