

Proverbs 31 - A Tribute to the Godly, Dedicated Woman

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Proverbs 31

VII. Lemuel's mother's advice (Prov 31:1-9)

- (1) Introduction (31:1-2)

1 The words of King Lemuel, the pronouncement which his mother taught him:

1 The words of King Lemuel, the oracle which his mother taught him:

1 The words of King Lemuel— a pronouncement with which his mother encouraged him.

1 The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him.

2 What, my son? And what, son of my womb? And what, son of my vows?

2 What, O my son? And what, O son of my womb? And what, O son of my vows?

2 No, my son! No, my son whom I conceived! No, my son to whom I gave birth!

2 What, my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows?

(2) Abstain from drunkenness and immorality (31:3-7)

- 3 Do not give your strength to women, Or your ways to that which destroys kings.
- 3 Do not give your strength to women, Or your ways to that which destroys kings.
- 3 Never devote all your energy to sex, or dedicate your life to destroying kings.
- 3 Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroys kings.

- 4 It is not for kings, Lemuel, It is not for kings to drink wine, Or for rulers to desire intoxicating drink,
- 4 It is not for kings, O Lemuel, It is not for kings to drink wine, Or for rulers to desire strong drink,
- 4 It is not for kings, Lemuel— Not for kings to drink wine or for rulers to desire liquor.
- 4 It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink:

- 5 Otherwise they will drink and forget what is decreed, And pervert the rights of all the needy.
- 5 For they will drink and forget what is decreed, And pervert the rights of all the afflicted.
- 5 Otherwise, they may drink and forget what has been ordained, perverting justice for all the oppressed.
- 5 Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.

- 6 Give intoxicating drink to one who is perishing, And wine to one whose life is bitter.
- 6 Give strong drink to him who is perishing, And wine to him whose life is bitter.
- 6 Give liquor to someone who is perishing, and wine to someone who is deeply depressed.
- 6 Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts.

- 7 Let him drink and forget his poverty, And remember his trouble no more.
- 7 Let him drink and forget his poverty And remember his trouble no more.
- 7 Let him drink, forget his poverty, and remember his troubles no more.
- 7 Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.

(3) Promote justice (31:8-9)

- 8 Open your mouth for the people who cannot speak, For the rights of all the unfortunate.
- 8 Open your mouth for the mute, For the rights of all the unfortunate.
- 8 Speak for those who cannot speak; seek justice for all those on the verge of destruction.
- 8 Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction.

- 9 Open your mouth, judge righteously, |And defend the rights of the poor and needy.

- 9 Open your mouth, judge righteously, And defend the rights of the afflicted and needy.
- 9 Speak up, judge righteously, and defend the rights of the afflicted and oppressed.
- 9 Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.

VIII. Wonderful wife (Prov 31:10-31)

(1) Her worth (31:10)

- 10 An **excellent** wife, who can find *her*? For her worth is far above jewels.
- 10 An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels.
- 10 Who can find a capable wife? Her value far exceeds the finest jewels.
- 10 Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.

(2) Her spouse (31:11-12)

- 11 The heart of her husband trusts in her, And he will have no lack of gain.
- 11 The heart of her husband trusts in her, And he will have no lack of gain.
- 11 Her husband has full confidence in her; as a result, he lacks nothing of value.
- 11 The heart of her husband does safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.

- 12 She does him good and not evil All the days of her life.
- 12 She does him good and not evil All the days of her life.
- 12 She will bring good to him—never evil— every day of her life.
- 12 She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.

(3) Her tasks (31:13-21)

(A) Sewing (31:13,19,21)

- 13 She looks for wool and linen, And works with her hands in delight.
- 13 She looks for wool and flax And works with her hands in delight.
- 13 She seeks out wool and flax, working with eager hands.
- 13 She seeks wool, and flax, and works willingly with her hands.

(B) Cooking (31:14-15)

- 14 She is like merchant ships; She brings her food from afar.
- 14 She is like merchant ships; She brings her food from afar.
- 14 She is like a seagoing ship that brings her food from far away.
- 14 She is like the merchants' ships; she brings her food from afar.

- 15 And she rises while it is still night And gives food to her household, And portions to her attendants.

15 She rises also while it is still night And gives food to her household And portions to her maidens.

15 She rises while it is still night, preparing meals for her family and providing for her women servants.

15 She rises also while it is yet night, and gives meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.

(C) Gardening (31:16-18)

16 She considers a field and buys it; From her earnings she plants a vineyard.

16 She considers a field and buys it; From her earnings she plants a vineyard.

16 She evaluates a field and purchases it; from the proceeds she plants a vineyard.

16 She considers a field, and buys it: with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard.

17 She surrounds her waist with strength And makes her arms strong.

17 She girds herself with strength And makes her arms strong.

17 She clothes herself with fortitude, and fortifies her arms with strength.

17 She girds her loins with strength, and strengthens her arms.

18 She senses that her profit is good; Her lamp does not go out at night.

18 She senses that her gain is good; Her lamp does not go out at night.

18 She is confident that her profits are sufficient. Her lamp does not go out at night.

18 She perceives that her merchandise is good: her candle goes not out by night.

19 She stretches out her hands to the distaff, And her hands grasp the spindle.

19 She stretches out her hands to the distaff, And her hands grasp the spindle.

19 She works with her own hands on her clothes— her hands work the sewing spindle.

19 She lays her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.

(D) Philanthropy (31:20)

20 She extends her hand to the poor, And she stretches out her hands to the needy.

20 She extends her hand to the poor, And she stretches out her hands to the needy.

20 She reaches out to the poor, opening her hands to those in need.

20 She stretches out her hand to the poor; yea, she reaches forth her hands to the needy.

(4) Her clothing (31:21-22)

21 She is not afraid of the snow for her household, For all her household are clothed with scarlet.

21 She is not afraid of the snow for her household, For all her household are clothed with scarlet.

21 She is unafraid of winter's effect on her household, because all of them are warmly clothed.

21 She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet.

22 She makes coverings for herself; Her clothing is fine linen and purple.

22 She makes coverings for herself; Her clothing is fine linen and purple.

22 She creates her own bedding, using fine linen and violet cloth.

22 She makes herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple.

(5) Her spouse's reputation (31:23)

23 Her husband is known in the gates, When he sits among the elders of the land.

23 Her husband is known in the gates, When he sits among the elders of the land.

23 Her husband is well known; he sits among the leaders of the land.

23 Her husband is known in the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land.

(6) Her business ventures (31:24)

24 She makes linen garments and sells *them*, And supplies belts to the tradesmen.

24 She makes linen garments and sells *them*, And supplies belts to the tradesmen.

24 She designs and sells linen garments, supplying accessories to clothiers.

24 She makes fine linen, and sells it; and delivers girdles unto the merchant.

(7) Her character (31:25-26)

25 Strength and dignity are her clothing, And she smiles at the future.

25 Strength and dignity are her clothing, And she smiles at the future.

25 Strength and dignity are her garments; she smiles about the future.

25 Strength and honor are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.

26 She opens her mouth in wisdom, And the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.

26 She opens her mouth in wisdom, And the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.

26 She speaks wisely, teaching with gracious love.

26 She opens her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.

(8) Her industriousness (31:27)

27 She watches over the activities of her household, And does not eat the bread of idleness.

- 27 She looks well to the ways of her household, And does not eat the bread of idleness.
- 27 She looks discretely to the affairs of her household, and she is never lazy.
- 27 She looks well to the ways of her household, and eats not the bread of idleness.

(9) Her reputation (31:28-31)

- 28 Her children rise up and bless her; Her husband *also*, and he praises her, *saying*:
- 28 Her children rise up and bless her; Her husband *also*, and he praises her, *saying*:
- 28 Her children stand up and encourage her, as does her husband, who praises her:
- 28 Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her.

- 29 "Many daughters have done nobly, But you excel them all."
- 29 "Many daughters have done nobly, But you excel them all."
- 29 "Many women have done wonderful things," he says, "but you surpass all of them!"
- 29 Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excel them all.

- 30 Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, *But* a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.
- 30 Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, *But* a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.
- 30 Charm is deceitful and beauty fades; but a woman who fears the LORD will be praised.
- 30 Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that fears the LORD, she shall be praised.

- 31 Give her the product of her hands, And let her works praise her in the gates.
- 31 Give her the product of her hands, And let her works praise her in the gates.
- 31 Reward her for her work— let her actions result in public praise.
- 31 Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.