

PROVERBS 31 – The Words of King Lemuel’s Mother!

5/10/25 – Sat. Morn. Prayer - P. Twente, <https://www.ptwente.com> 714 425-9221; ptwente@gmail.com

Pro 31:1 The words of King Lemuel, the utterance which his mother taught him:

- As with Agur in Proverbs 30, we don’t know anything about *King Lemuel*. He is not in any recorded list of the kings of Judah or Israel, so he was probably a pagan king who put his trust in Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel, and through the fear of the Lord learned wisdom. The king’s mother is teaching her son to obey the Word of God. Some think that “*King Lemuel*” is actually King Solomon, but we have no proof of this.

Pro 31:2 What, my son? And what, son of my womb? And what, son of my vows?

- King Lemuel’s mother spoke to him with great tenderness, describing her connection with him in three ways. He was her son; but then also the son of her womb, having given birth to him, and finally, he was the son of her vows; her promises and commitments.

Pro 31:3 Do not give your strength to women, Nor your ways to that which destroys kings.

- Excessive sexual interest in women wastes a man’s *strength*. This speaks of an unhealthy obsession with romance or sex, which have a proper place in life, but should not be made into a reason for living. The practice of sexual immorality and sex obsession gives away a man’s *strength*, in the sense of his spiritual strength, his self-respect, his self-control, his example and standing in the community.
- ***Nor your ways to that which destroys kings***: Lemuel’s mother warned him, and us all, against sexual and romantic obsession, something so powerful it *destroys kings* – even the greatest kings. King Solomon himself was destroyed as he gave his *strength to women*. Solomon’s father, King David, suffered tragically when he gave his *strength to women*.

Pro 31:4 It is not for kings, O Lemuel, It is not for kings to drink wine, Nor for princes intoxicating drink;

- It is interesting that in the New Testament, as Paul gives the requirements for the bishops in the church, those men who are to oversee the affairs of the church, Paul tells us that they are not to be given to wine. It is not for kings, it is not for those who are in a position of leadership, spiritual leadership.

Pro 31:5 Lest they drink and forget the law, And pervert the justice of all the afflicted.

- ***Lest they drink and forget the law***: The responsibilities of a king are so great that it is essential that he not be impaired in his judgment or abilities in any way. This principle is true not only for **kings**, but for leaders of many types, including and especially those who consider themselves leaders among God’s people today.
- ***Pervert the justice of all the afflicted***: This can readily be done by a drunken judge, because alcohol destroys brain cells, depriving a man of the use of reason to distinguish between right and wrong.”

Pro 31:6 Give strong drink to him who is perishing, And wine to those who are bitter of heart.

Pro 31:7 Let him drink and forget his poverty, And remember his misery no more.

- King Lemuel’s mother thought of two more appropriate drinkers rather than the king. First, she thought of the condemned criminal who needs to be numbed by *strong drink* on his way to execution. Second, she thought of those who are bitter of heart, who could

drink and forget his poverty and remember his misery no more. It isn't that there are no consequences for drinking in these two cases, but that the consequences have little impact in comparison to the king or leader.

- Don't use alcohol as others do as an excuse to cover problems.

Pro 31:8 Open your mouth for the speechless, In the cause of all who are appointed to die.

- Speak up for those who are the underdogs, speak up for those that are the oppressed.

Pro 31:9 Open your mouth, judge righteously, And plead the cause of the poor and needy.

- Because you know that you will be cooperating with God, who is interested in the poor and needy.

The Ideal Woman Who Fears the Lord (acrostic poem)

- Now in the beginning, she warns him about the strange women, but now she tells him the kind of a woman he should look for, but how hard she is to find.

Pro 31:10 Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies.

- Such a woman is valuable, indeed is priceless! Her price is far above rubies.

Pro 31:11 The heart of her husband safely trusts her; So he will have no lack of gain.

- She is trustworthy in every way!

Pro 31:12 She does him good and not evil All the days of her life.

- She accepts her God given role as a helpmate. She always does him good all the days of her life!

Pro 31:13 She seeks wool and flax, And willingly works with her hands.

- She is hard-working and industrious.

Pro 31:14 She is like the merchant ships, She brings her food from afar.

- She shops for bargains, willing to go great distances to gather her food at the best prices.

Pro 31:15 She also rises while it is yet night, And provides food for her household, And a portion for her maidservants.

- She looks over the affairs of the family, she is very industrious, she is also very wise.

Pro 31:16 She considers a field and buys it; From her profits she plants a vineyard.

- She has good business sense, being well-budgeted, she uses savings to buy more property.

Pro 31:17 She girds herself with strength, And strengthens her arms.

- She is a strong woman, plants her own vineyard, buys the field.

Pro 31:18 She perceives that her merchandise is good, And her lamp does not go out by night.

- She looks for good merchandise, good bargains in merchandise.
- Her price is above rubies, I mean, and she is rare! She gets up before it is light, and she stays up late at night, she works all day in the field, shops for bargains, and the whole thing! Besides raising the kids!

Pro 31:19 She stretches out her hands to the distaff (round, circuit), And her hand holds the spindle (spins around).

- She weaves her clothes, her cloth and so forth.

Pro 31:20 She extends her hand to the poor, Yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy.

- She is compassionate and generous to those in need.

Pro 31:21 *She is not afraid of snow for her household, For all her household is clothed with scarlet.*

- She makes sure her family is warmly dressed!

Pro 31:22 *She makes tapestry for herself; Her clothing is fine linen and purple.*

- She makes tapestry and rugs, clothing her family in fine linen and purple.

Pro 31:23 *Her husband is known in the gates, When he sits among the elders of the land.*

- I mean, he can stand in the gates all day long, and talk with the fellows, achieving a life that he could never achieve without her!

Pro 31:24 *She makes linen garments and sells them, And supplies sashes for the merchants.*

- She is productive, working hard enough to supply her family's needs plus supplying sashes for selling to the merchants.

Pro 31:25 *Strength and honor are her clothing; She shall rejoice in time to come.*

- She displays good moral character, feeling secure, rejoicing in the future.

Pro 31:26 *She opens her mouth with wisdom, And on her tongue is the law of kindness.*

- She uses her mouth to communicate kindness and wisdom to her children and others.

Pro 31:27 *She watches over the ways of her household, And does not eat the bread of idleness.*

- Her family is of high priority. She is not idle or lazy!

Pro 31:28 *Her children rise up and call her blessed; Her husband also, and he praises her:*

- Both her husband and her children express their appreciation to her!

Pro 31:29 *"Many daughters have done well, But you excel them all."*

- Now the final word, and of course I guess you will go back to the beginning. "Who can find a virtuous woman?" That is a good question! One that would do all those things, I doubt if you could find today. But I think that really the, the crown of a virtuous woman is when her children rise and call her blessed, and when her husband praises her. We are talking about cultural things in all of these, but there are other marks of virtue today.

Characteristics that are to be sought for in a wife, in a woman

Pro 31:30 *Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing (temporary), But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.*

- *Beauty is passing.* There is an old Swedish proverb, "Good looks don't last, good cooking does!" Beauty is vain. I feel sorry for a person who has made beauty their big thing in life. They just cannot stand growing older. I mean it is just really devastating to them. It takes longer and longer for them to be beautiful. It is so devastating for them. But it is vain. True beauty is not the outward beauty. The true beauty is of the heart, and that only increases with the years. (**1Pe 3:3-4**) *Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel— [4] rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.*
- *But a woman that fears the Lord.* Who walks with the Lord, walks in fellowship with God, *she shall be praised.* Therein is true beauty! An interesting observation of life, and of the virtuous woman.

Pro 31:31 *Give her of the fruit of her hands, And let her own works praise her in the gates.*

- The beauty of her life is well spoken of far and wide.

***The love of God is greater far Than tongue or pen can ever tell;
It goes beyond the highest star, And reaches to the lowest hell;
The guilty pair, bowed down with care, God gave His Son to win;
His erring child He reconciled, And pardoned from his sin.***

***Refrain: Oh, love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure— The saints' and angels' song.***

***Could we with ink the ocean fill, And were the skies of parchment made,
Were every stalk on earth a quill, And every man a scribe by trade;
To write the love of God above Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole, Though stretched from sky to sky. (Refrain)***

“Woman” verses in Proverbs:

*Pro_2:16 To deliver you from the **immoral woman** (5x), From the **seductress** (4x) who flatters with her words,*

*Pro_5:3 For the lips of an **immoral woman** drip honey, And her mouth is smoother than oil;*

*Pro_5:20 For why should you, my son, be enraptured by an **immoral woman**, And be embraced in the arms of a **seductress**?*

*Pro_6:24 To keep you from the **evil woman**, From the flattering tongue of a **seductress**.*

Pro_6:32 Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; He who does so destroys his own soul.

*Pro_7:5 That they may keep you from the **immoral woman**, From the **seductress** who flatters with her words.*

Pro_7:10 And there a woman met him, With the attire of a harlot, and a crafty heart.

*Pro_9:13 A **foolish woman** is clamorous; She is simple, and knows nothing.*

*Pro_11:16 **A gracious woman** retains honor, But ruthless men retain riches.*

*Pro_11:22 As a ring of gold in a swine's snout, So is a **lovely woman** who lacks discretion.*

*Pro_14:1 The **wise woman** builds her house, But the **foolish** pulls it down with her hands.*

*Pro_21:9 Better to dwell in a corner of a housetop, Than in a house shared with a **contentious** (4x) **woman**.*

*Pro_21:19 Better to dwell in the wilderness, Than with a **contentious and angry woman**.*

*Pro_22:14 The mouth of an **immoral woman** is a deep pit; He who is abhorred by the LORD will fall there.*

*Pro_25:24 It is better to dwell in a corner of a housetop, Than in a house shared with a **contentious woman**.*

*Pro_27:15 A continual dripping on a very rainy day And a **contentious woman** are alike;*

*Pro_30:20 This is the way of an **adulterous woman**: She eats and wipes her mouth, And says, "I have done no wickedness."*

*Pro_30:23 A **hateful woman** when she is married, And a maidservant who succeeds her mistress.*

*Pro_31:30 Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, But a **woman who fears the LORD**, she shall be praised*