

The Virtuous Woman – Prov. 31

- 31:1 – Words of King Lemuel, as taught by his mother
 - Lemuel may be Solomon or someone else
- 31:3-9 – Warnings/Guidance for a king
 - Section often ignored, but contrast these warnings focused on a king with the ideal attributes for the wife in the following section
 - Dangers of women and alcohol, cloud one’s judgment – 5:9; 23:33
 - Ruler should advocate for voiceless, poor, needy – Looking out for interests of others
- 31:10 – Dating
 - Who can find a virtuous wife?
 - Indicates a search; hard to locate
 - What follows doesn’t describe one perfect woman, but good character traits
- 31:11-18 – Youth
 - 11 – How the husband treats her, with Trust. 1 Cor. 13:7
 - 12-14 – She works hard for herself, her husband, her family
 - 15 – Dedication, cooperative effort
 - 16 – Business savvy; husband apparently not involved because he trusts her
 - Weighs consequences of decision – focus on long-term benefits for family
 - Work done in 12-15 led to opportunity in 16 for her to make this investment
 - 17-18 – Doesn’t stop working, but continues to strengthen herself
 - Reflects on hard work and success and keeps working
- 31:19-22 – Middle age
 - Having addressed primary needs of family, she can now help those less fortunate – Eph. 4:28
 - Not lazy – Prov. 19:15; 20:13
 - Hard work even allows family to have some nicer things (scarlet, purple)
- 31:23-25 – Senior years
 - Her hard work has bolstered husband’s reputation
 - Progression of her labors—now making high-end linen garments that sell for higher price
 - Her clothing is strength and honor, obtained by years of hard work
- 31:26-29 – Elderly years
 - Experience and success lead to wisdom, and an audience eager to learn from her
 - She wasn’t born this way, but became virtuous through a lifetime of hard work and service to others. You don’t “find” her as a young adult—she grows into it, 18:22; 12:4
- 31:30-31 – How she is remembered
 - Praised in the gates just like her husband
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