

**Message #134****Proverbs 31:1-31**

Not much is known about King Lemuel except what we learn in this chapter. He learned a great deal from his mother and the word “oracle” indicates she taught him structured, inspired words of God. His name “Lemuel” means “to God.” Although Lemuel was a king, he credits his spiritual godliness to his mother.

**A GODLY MOTHER CAN HAVE A GREAT IMPACT ON HER SON, AND BY HER COUNSEL AND HER EXAMPLE MAY PRODUCE A GODLY, SPIRITUAL LEADER.**

**INFLUENCE WAY #1** – A godly mother influences a son by her godly counsel to negatively avoid certain things. **31:1-9**

The repetition of the word “what” indicates this is what this mother believed was very important seeing that he was her son, from her womb, who had been dedicated to her God (**31:2**).

**Warning #1** - The warning against women. **31:3**

The word “strength” does not just refer to physical immorality, but one’s power, might and military rank. The word “destroy” means the wrong kind of woman can ruin or wipe out a potential great leader.

**Warning #2** - The warning against wine. **31:4-7**

The words “wine” and “strong drink,” which occur twice in the context (**31:4, 6**) are two different Hebrew words. Wine refers to fermented drink that comes from grapes and strong drink refers to fermented drink that comes from barley, honey or dates. Wine would be like our wine and strong drink would be like our beer. The word “drink” (v. **4, 5, 7**) is one that refers to a party-type of drinking, which specifically took place at banquets and places of carousing (Gesenius, p. 853). The challenge to Lemuel is to stay away from carousing-type of drinking that could leave a king intoxicated. As Dr. Waltke said, “...drinking to the point of inebriation” (Vol. 2, p. 507). In fact, **verse 6** assumes some sort of wine cellar existed in the king’s home.

**(Reason #1)** - When one becomes intoxicated he disregards God’s Word. **31:5a**

**(Reason #2)** - When one becomes intoxicated he disregards justice. **31:5**

**Verses 6-7** inform us that there is a place for these drinks as an anesthetic to deaden physical or emotional pain.

**Warning #3** - The warning against injustice. **31:8-9**

Lemuel’s mother wanted her son to always care for and defend those who were hurting and helpless. In fact, the word “dumb” refers to those who cannot speak for themselves.

**INFLUENCE WAY #2** – A godly mother influences a son by her godly example and challenge to positively find an excellent wife. **31:10-31**

In Hebrew, these verses are an acrostic poem. Each of the 22 verses begins with a consecutive letter of the Hebrew alphabet (i.e. v. 10=Aleph / v. 31=Tau). Obviously this was done for memorization purposes. This godly mother wanted her son to memorize this. The description of this wife came from a woman (**31:1, 10**); this kind of woman is possible; this kind of woman will be highly honored; this kind of woman is what young men should try to find.

- Fact #1** - She is priceless. **31:10**–“jewels” plural=extreme wealth
- Fact #2** - She is trusted. **31:11**–“no lack of gain”=financial words she enhances, not diminishes
- Fact #3** - She does good for her husband. **31:12**–“all”=not momentary
- Fact #4** - She willingly works. **31:13**–She “looks” for ways to help and “delights” in working
- Fact #5** - She creatively shops. **31:14**–She was creative in her meal preparation
- Fact #6** - She ambitiously rises. **31:15**–She gets up early to prepare breakfast and assignments
- Fact #7** - She is intelligently industrious. **31:16**–Smart business woman–buys, works, sells
- Fact #8** - She strengthens herself. **31:17**–“strength”–more physical word; strong–more mental
- Fact #9** - She continually evaluates. **31:18** - Always assessing self and work to see it is good
- Fact #10** - She personally works. **31:19**–worked at being a seamstress–“distaff” winds thread
- Fact #11** - She generously ministers. **31:20**–Is always interested in helping the poor and needy
- Fact #12** - She adequately provides. **31:21**–She takes good care of her family
- Fact #13** - She attractively decorates. **31:22**–She uses self-earned money to make her home nice
- Fact #14** - She spiritually promotes. **31:23**–She wants her husband devoting time to spiritual leadership
- Fact #15** - She ambitiously markets. **31:24**–She always made quality things marketable
- Fact #16** - She anticipates the future. **31:25**–She is not afraid of the future, physically or eternally
- Fact #17** - She wisely speaks. **31:26**–Speech is controlled–she speaks wisely and kindly
- Fact #18** - She carefully manages. **31:27**–She takes good care of her house and those in it

Five results for this type of woman:

- 1) Her children will honor her. **31:28a**
- 2) Her husband will honor her. **31:28b**
- 3) Her society will honor her. **31:29**
- 4) Her God will honor her. **31:30**
- 5) Her rewards will honor her. **31:31**

What motivates a woman to want to become so godly and wise? The answer is in **verse 30**–the “fear of the LORD.” This is where Proverbs begins and this is where it ends.

The fear of the LORD is what makes men, women and children wise. This, in capsule form, is the key to wisdom.