

## PROVERBS 31: A Mother's Lessons to Her Child (Part 3)

<p><sup>1</sup> The words of King Lemuel, the utterance (<i>massa</i>) which his mother taught him:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The word translated "utterance" is <i>massa</i>, a name of a son of Ishmael. It is likely that this is written to a descendant of Massa, and king of a tribe in north Arabia (Gen 25:14; 1 Chr 1:30).</li> <li>• Thus, "The words of Lemuel, king of Massa, with which his mother instructed him."</li> <li>• This is a record of the active <u>influence</u> of a mother towards her son, and indicates a range of <u>topics</u> about which a mother can influence her children.</li> </ul>	
<p><sup>2</sup> What, my son? And what, son of my womb? And what, son of my vows?</p>	<p><b>1. Teach About Origin</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of <u>belonging</u></li> <li>• Sense of <u>connection</u></li> <li>• Sense of <u>direction</u></li> </ul>
<p><sup>3</sup> Do not give your strength to women [<i>ishshah</i> – here PLURAL, cp. V10], Nor your ways [<i>time, habits, energy, focus</i>] to that which destroys kings.</p>	<p><b>2. Teach About Purity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not give over your <u>power</u></li> <li>• Do not give over your <u>purpose</u></li> </ul>
<p><sup>4</sup> It is not for kings, O Lemuel, <i>It is</i> not for kings to drink wine, Nor for princes intoxicating drink [<i>shekar</i>]; <sup>5</sup> Lest they drink and forget the law, And pervert the justice of all the afflicted.</p>	<p><b>3. Teach About Sobriety</b></p> <p><b>Restrictions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No wine</li> <li>• No intoxicating ("strong") drink</li> </ul> <p><b>Reasons</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Forget</u> the law</li> <li>• <u>Pervert</u> the justice</li> </ul>
<p><sup>6</sup> Give strong drink [<i>shekar</i>] to him who is perishing, And wine to those who are bitter of heart. <sup>7</sup> Let him drink and forget his poverty, And remember his misery no more.</p>	<p><b>4. Teach About Mercy</b></p> <p><b>Prescription</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong drink → One <u>dying</u></li> <li>• Wine → One <u>bitter</u> of heart</li> </ul> <p><b>Purpose (medicinal)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wine → Relaxant / <u>Sleep</u> aid</li> <li>• Strong drink → Pain killer</li> </ul>
<p><sup>8</sup> Open your mouth for the speechless, In the cause of all <i>who are</i> appointed to die (lit. "children of passing"). <sup>9</sup> Open your mouth, judge righteously, And plead the cause of the poor and needy.</p>	<p><b>5. Teach About Justice</b></p> <p><b>What</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See</li> <li>• Speak Up</li> <li>• Sort Out ("judge righteously")</li> </ul> <p><b>Who</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those that have no <u>voice</u></li> <li>• Those that have no <u>hope</u></li> <li>• Those that have no <u>help</u></li> </ul>
<p><sup>10</sup> Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth <i>is</i> far above rubies. <sup>11</sup> The heart of her husband safely trusts her; So he will have no lack of gain. <sup>12</sup> She does him good and not evil All the days of her life.</p>	<p><b>6. Teach About Matrimony</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek <u>one</u> wife [<i>ishshah</i>]</li> <li>• Seek a <u>virtuous</u> wife</li> <li>• <u>Value</u> of a virtuous wife</li> <li>• 11-12 opposite of <i>destroys</i> (v3)</li> <li>• 11-31 The type of woman to look for</li> </ul>

## Characteristics to Look for in a Spouse

<p><sup>10</sup> Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth <i>is</i> far above rubies.</p>	<p><b>Virtuous &amp; Valuable</b></p>
<p><sup>11</sup> The heart of her husband safely trusts her; So he will have no lack of gain.</p>	<p><b>Trustworthy &amp; Safe</b></p>
<p><sup>12</sup> She does him good and not evil All the days of her life.</p>	<p><b>Intent &amp; Extent</b></p>
<p><sup>13</sup> She seeks wool and flax, And willingly works with her hands.</p>	<p><b>Inventive &amp; Motivated</b></p>
<p><sup>14</sup> She is like the merchant ships, She brings her food from afar.</p>	<p><b>Active &amp; Mobile</b></p>
<p><sup>15</sup> She also rises while it is yet night, And provides food for her household, And a portion for her maidservants.</p>	<p><b>Selfless &amp; Structured</b></p>
<p><sup>16</sup> She considers a field and buys it; From her profits she plants a vineyard.</p>	<p><b>Productive &amp; Proactive</b></p>
<p><sup>17</sup> She girds herself with strength, And strengthens her arms.</p>	<p><b>Helpful &amp; Hardworking</b></p>
<p><sup>18</sup> She perceives that her merchandise <i>is</i> good, And her lamp does not go out by night.</p>	<p><b>Reflective &amp; Routine</b></p>
<p><sup>19</sup> She stretches out her hands to the distaff, And her hand holds the spindle.</p>	<p><b>Skillful &amp; Resourceful</b></p>
<p><sup>20</sup> She extends her hand to the poor, Yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy.</p>	<p><b>Aware &amp; Caring</b></p>
<p><sup>21</sup> She is not afraid of snow for her household, For all her household <i>is</i> clothed with scarlet.</p>	<p><b>Plans &amp; Prioritizes</b></p>
<p><sup>22</sup> She makes tapestry for herself; Her clothing <i>is</i> fine linen and purple.</p>	<p><b>Self-aware &amp; Fashionable</b></p>
<p><sup>23</sup> Her husband is known in the gates, When he sits among the elders of the land.</p>	<p><b>Enabling &amp; Freeing</b></p>
<p><sup>24</sup> She makes linen garments and sells <i>them</i>, And supplies sashes for the merchants.</p>	<p><b>Industrious &amp; Frugal</b></p>
<p><sup>25</sup> Strength and honor <i>are</i> her clothing; She shall rejoice in time to come.</p>	<p><b>Modest &amp; Eternal</b></p>
<p><sup>26</sup> She opens her mouth with wisdom, And on her tongue <i>is</i> the law of kindness.</p>	<p><b>Wisely &amp; Kindly Spoken</b></p>
<p><sup>27</sup> She watches over the ways of her household, And does not eat the bread of idleness.</p>	<p><b>Watchful &amp; Diligent</b></p>
<p><b>Summary Of Value</b></p>	
<p><sup>28</sup> Her children rise up and call her blessed; Her husband <i>also</i>, and he praises her: <sup>29</sup> "Many daughters have done well, But you excel them all."</p>	<p><b>Blessed by her children</b> <b>Blessed by her husband</b></p>
<p><sup>30</sup> Charm <i>is</i> deceitful and beauty <i>is</i> passing, But a woman <i>who</i> fears the LORD, she shall be praised.</p>	<p><b>Externals vs Godliness</b></p>
<p><sup>31</sup> Give her of the fruit of her hands, And let her own works praise her in the gates.</p>	<p><b>Reward of her hands</b> <b>Reward of her reputation</b></p>