

January 23rd, 2022AM – Kevin Olivier
Proverbs 31:10-31 – “The Excellent Wife”

- A. One of the most important questions you can ever ask is, “Who should I marry?”
- B. This chapter of Proverbs includes Holy Spirit-inspired wisdom from a godly woman to her son Lemuel to be a wise king.
1. A key part of advice from a godly mother was for her son to avoid ungodly women → **(v3)**
— **Prov 6:26a** “**For on account of a harlot one is reduced to a loaf [crust] of bread**”
 2. King Lemuel is told to give his heart to an excellent, godly wife who fears the Lord.
 3. Men should also pay special attention to today’s text.

What makes for an excellent, worthy wife.	I. <u>HER INGENUITY & DILIGENCE</u> II. <u>HER GODLINESS</u> III. <u>THE FRUIT OF HER WAYS</u>
---	--

I. HER INGENUITY & DILIGENCE

A. She is not satisfied with mediocrity: → **vv13-19**: “**She looks for wool & flax & works with her hands in delight. ¹⁴She is like merchant ships; she brings her food from afar.**”

1. A temptation in America is to do just enough to “get-by.”
2. What is exceptional about the excellent wife is that she finds pleasure in her work; **v13** says she “**works with her hands in delight**”
 - a. She even enjoys what others consider as chores (cooking) or hard work (agriculture).
 - b. She found noble, God-given purpose in her work. God gives her satisfaction when she does a job to His glory. **18a**: “**She senses that her gain is good;...**”
3. She goes above & beyond what is expected of her. It should be the job of her maidens to prepare food for her & the household yet **v15** says...
4. Rather than being mediocre or ordinary in the kitchen, “**She is like merchant ships; she brings her food from afar.**”

B. The excellent wife has ingenuity to help earn money for her household.

1. In **v16**, she manages money well by investing it to make a profit: “**She considers a field & buys it; from her earnings she plants a vineyard.**”... (**v4**)“**She makes linen garments & sells them, & supplies belts to the tradesmen.**”
 - a. She looks at ways to make money that in turn can be used to make more money.
 - b. God has given her wisdom to consider properties & materials that can be profitable.
2. Weaving fabric by hand may not be the wisest means to make money for your family.

C. The txt says she is an amazingly diligent person.

1. She exercises not so she can look in the mirror but instead so she can be more capable worker. **(v17)** “**She girds herself with strength & makes her arms strong.**”
2. She rises early in the morning while it is still dark (**v15**) yet works past dark; **v18** says “**her lamp does not go out at night**” while she works at the distaff & spindle (**v19**).
3. Her motivation towards diligence is found in **v27** & again in **vv21-22**.

II. HER GODLINESS

- A. She is a faithful spouse; → **v12** “**She does him good & not evil all the days of her life.**”
- Here we have to read between the lines here; Solomon said in **Eccles 7**: “**Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good & who never sins.**”
 - No doubt such a woman speaks her mind to him, yet does so in a way that is respectful.
 - She remains faithful to him alone & doesn’t let her affections drift to another man.
 - v12** is a call for us to keep our wedding vows.
- B. Her faith in God is accompanied by evidential good works; **v20** says “**She extends her hand to the poor, & she stretches out her hands to the needy.**”
- Caring for widows & orphans as pure & undefiled religion in the sight of God (**Ja 1:27**) is not just the work of deacons. The **Proverbs 31** woman took it to heart as well.
- C. The excellent wife is filled with the fruit of the Holy Spirit according to **vv25-26**. → Turn there.
- This verse proves that God wants us to be optimistic rather than pessimistic.
 - Turn to **Gal 5:19-25**
- D. Above all, her godly trait that is the driving force behind her diligence, kindness, generosity, wisdom, & faith is her wholesome fear of the Lord. → Turn to **v30**.
- It is impossible for there to be a modern-day **Proverbs 31** woman unless she is united to Christ by faith. In **Jn 15:5** Jesus said, “**I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me & I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.**”

III. THE FRUIT OF HER WAYS

- A. Trust (**v11a**) “**The heart of her husband trusts in her,...**”
- Any fruitful marriage needs to be built on trust.
 - Such an excellent wife can be trusted— she can be depended upon.
 - A 1980s band called the Styx wrote a song called “**She cares.**”
 - A woman filled with the Holy Spirit who fears God & clothes herself with strength, dignity, kindness, & divine wisdom can be trusted because she is of a supernatural origin.
- B. Another fruit her husband has through her is that “**... he will have no lack of gain**” (**11b**).
- Her diligence produces wealth rather than wastes it.
 - Because of she is an excellent, kind, diligent, generous, & faithful wife, her husband gets a good reputation that is a blessing in almost anything he does in the community. → Look at **v23**.
- C. Such an excellent wife is praised by the community, but what matters more to her is that she is praised by her children & her husband. → turn to (**vv28-31**)
- The Hebrew word for “**praise**” can be transliterated as “hll.” “Halleluiah” is to praise Yahweh.
 - To sing “Halleluiah” is for God alone yet there is an appropriate use of praise for the ones we love.
 - There is still a place for such praise in marriage as we get up in age in our marriage.
 - What is praise worthy of the excellent wife is her selfless service to her husband, children, & even to the poor & needy. That is what makes her noble & exceptional.

Review, conclusion, & further application: