

GREAT CHAPTERS OF THE BIBLE-08

PROVERBS, CHAPTER 31

I. INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Proverbs 31:10-22.**
- B. We continue with our series on the Greatest Chapters of the Bible.
- C. Some scholars think that King Lemuel is actually Solomon, but there is no proof of this. The emphasis in 31:1-9 is the value of a son (or daughter) listening to a mother's wisdom.
- D. The ideal woman is pictured in 31:9-31. Not ideal in the world's eyes, but ideal in God's.
- E. I have taken the chapter and re-arranged it by subject:
 1. Her sphere.
 2. Her character.
 3. Her reward.
 4. Her religion.

II. HER SPHERE.

- A. In Marriage (Prov. 31:10).

An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels.

 1. Don't let the world convince you that there is a more noble service to the world, outside the home.
 2. One good spiritual work never competes with another. It is just as beneficial to "stay home with the baggage" than it is to "fight on the front lines" (see 1Sam. 30:24).
- B. In the Work of the Home (Prov. 31:15,18).

She rises also while it is still night, And gives food to her household, And portions to her maidens... [18] She senses that her gain is good; Her lamp does not go out at night.

 1. The virtuous woman will rise early and stay up late to be of service to those in her home.
 2. Her gain is good because it is borne out in the fruit attained by those she is helping.
- C. With the Domestic Responsibility (Prov. 31:12,19,21).

She does him good and not evil All the days of her life... [19] She stretches out her hands to the distaff, And her hands grasp the spindle... [21] She is not afraid of the snow for her household, For all her household are clothed with scarlet.

 1. Luther said, "The greatest gift of God is a pious, amiable spouse, who fears God, loves his house, and with whom one can live in perfect confidence."
 2. The woman of valor is a person who knows her responsibility in the home and keeps it. She does her husband good, she works hard at her tasks, and she is not afraid of danger for she is prepared. (This breeds confidence.)

III. HER CHARACTER.

- A. Trustworthy (Prov. 31:11,27).

The heart of her husband trusts in her, And he will have no lack of gain... [27] She looks well to the ways of her household, And does not eat the bread of idleness.

 1. "Behind every good man, there is a great woman."
 2. Her work in the home is pleasing to her husband. She is a source of fame, complacency, and confidence to the man who is blessed enough to call her "mine."
- B. Industrious (Prov. 31:13,14).

She looks for wool and flax, And works with her hands in delight... [14] She is like merchant ships; She brings her food from afar.

 1. The woman of valor considers that work is a virtue worth pursuing.
 2. Laziness and idleness are of the devil, and if one is to be "worth their salt" they will work hard and long to accomplish their tasks.
- C. Thrifty (Prov. 31:16).

She considers a field and buys it; From her earnings she plants a vineyard.

 1. Good women know a bargain when they see, and will buy it. (Why do you think there are so many sale ads in the papers--women are always looking for a sale.)
 2. The woman of valor is one who will always use her money wisely.

- D. Strong (Prov. 31:17,25).
She girds herself with strength, And makes her arms strong... [25] Strength and dignity are her clothing, And she smiles at the future.
1. She is strong in two ways; physically and mentally.
 2. She knows to keep her body strong by exercise, good eating, and moderation in all things. She will pace herself so that she has the energy to do her tasks.
 3. The woman of valor is mentally strong. She believes the old adage, "I don't know what the future holds, but I know Who holds the future." Good mental health includes being able to face each day with wisdom, laughter, and charm.
- E. Loving and Benevolent (Prov. 31:20).
She extends her hand to the poor; And she stretches out her hands to the needy.
1. She is not driven by selfish greed to improve her means and enlarge her revenues.
 2. She is sympathizing and charitable, and loves to extend to others the blessings which have rewarded her efforts.
- F. Gracious in Speech (Prov. 31:26).
She opens her mouth in wisdom, And the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.
1. A woman who, lies, curses, and gossips, is not lovable! Those who are gracious in speech are attractive, likable, and sought after.
 2. This woman will guide her family with words of wisdom. One translation says, "in her tongue is the law of kindness."

IV. HER REWARD.

- A. Her great influence (Prov. 31:23).
Her husband is known in the gates, When he sits among the elders of the land.
1. The woman of valor is crown to her husband. He is proud to "show her off" to those in his social circle. As his lovely queen she supports him in all things.
 2. Such a woman advances her husband's interests, increases his influence, and by attending to his domestic concerns enables him to take his share in the public matters.
- B. The Success of Her Energies (Prov. 31:24).
She makes linen garments and sells them, And supplies belts to the tradesmen.
1. The woman of valor needs very little in outside praise. Being able to work with her hands, make items of use, and then sell them to those in need is reward enough. She knows the needs of those around her and knows what she can do to help met those needs.
 2. It need not be an expensive item but one that is needed to make life a little better, a little easier.
- C. The Honor of Her Family (Prov. 31:28,29).
Her children rise up and bless her; Her husband also, and he praises her, saying: [29] "Many daughters have done nobly, But you excel them all."
1. The greatest compliment that a woman can have is that which comes from her own household. When her children tell the world of the great mother they have, that mother will know and feel her reward.
 2. When her husband compliments her far above all the others, she knows she is special. A woman wants her feelings validated. Tell her that her labor is not in vain and she will be glad, content, and ready to continue.
- D. A Continued Influence (Prov. 31:31).
Give her the product of her hands, And let her works praise her in the gates.
1. She is probably too busy with her domestic duties to take her place in public life, yet indirectly she is a great force in the world through her influence over her husband and children.
 2. This woman is a person of tremendous influence--not of squalor or domestic poverty. When the children are gone from home her influence for good will help them make good choices.

V. **HER RELIGION.**

A. A Life of Reverence and Service (Prov. 31:30).

Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.

Two things in this verse; the vanity of beauty, and of the grace of true religion.

1. *The vanity of beauty.* The woman of valor know that physical beauty is temporary, superficial, and deceptive. It will not bring the rewards, comfort, or stability that it promises.
2. *The grace of true religion.* God's woman also knows that true religion brings the things in life that she really wants; enduring stability, deep conviction and, satisfying experiences, and the hope of eternal life.

VI. **CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.**

A. God needs faithful women to do His will.

B. A wonderful check-list of spiritual maturity! What things are you lacking?

C. To become a woman of valor, one must obey X.

D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.