

# "What a Woman!"

## Proverbs 31:10-31

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The Virgin Mary was most blessed above women, the greatest woman who ever lived, and she made the greatest contribution to the world of any woman. Historically, Eve's offense is buried forever, by the obedience and victory of Mary, the Mother of our Lord. Mary could not take away sins, for only the Lord Jesus could do that, but of Mary was born the Son of God.

If Eve shows the weakness of woman, Mary shows woman's strength. Satan knew exactly what he was doing in the rise of the cult of Mary in the Roman church, for he knew the powerful example that she would be to women. By corrupting her memory, by an idolatrous adoration and usurpation, he attempted to overthrow godliness and true religion. The Virgin should be held up as an example of the godly woman to every age--not the paganism of a misconstrued emphasis on perpetual virginity, immaculate conception, or all of the other nonsense, but the godly wife and mother--the nurturer of our Lord, the "handmaid" of the Lord.

No woman can ever duplicate what Mary did. She is unique in the history of the world, just as her son, Jesus Christ, is unique. We are not saved because we imitate anyone in the Bible, but because we believe that Jesus died for our sins, and rose again for our justification.

Although we are not saved by imitating even our Lord Jesus, yet the Bible gives us many examples of how we ought to live. The Scripture was written for our admonition and instruction. There are many godly women in the Bible, and much teaching in the Bible about how women ought to live.

The model for godly womanhood--the ideal woman, you might say, is found in the chapter we read a moment ago. It is probably a poem in Hebrew, for each verse begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. It is the finest and most complete description of a godly woman's character that is found in the Bible.

**But let us look at the passage:**

vs. 10. **"Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies."** (Pr 31:10)

A virtuous woman. A strong woman. This word is used three times in this passage: here, in verse 17, and in verse 29. The word's basic meaning is "strength." It is most generally translated army in the Bible, but sometimes means wealth or power, valiant, or virtuous. Our English word "virtue" is derived from the Latin word for man. A virtuous is true to the nature of what it means to be a man. This is the same idea; when applied to woman, it would mean living according to the true nature of womanhood.

This is not a woman to be taken lightly. If modern feminists want to be taken seriously, then they should take Proverbs 31 seriously, for this is the description of the truly strong woman.

price: This woman's price is beyond rubies--far above. This woman is invaluable. She is a true wife and the fulfillment of the word of the Holy Spirit: He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord." A good wife is the best and finest gift God gives man in this world. She is to be esteemed and treasured very highly by her husband.

Her husband must support her and teach by example and precept that she is to be honored and esteemed in the home. The children must be allowed to sass her or otherwise treat her with disrespect, for this is against the 5th Commandment to honor father and mother. The behavior of husband to wife and wife to husband has immense consequences for the rearing of children and the worship of the Lord.

It is so important that the Apostle Peter told husbands: *"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."* (1Pe 3:7)

vs. 11. **"The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil."** (Pr 31:11)

Trust: a safe refuge. A place of security. He is safe with her. He doesn't need dishonest gain, because she is a positive economic asset. Not a liability, spiritually, emotionally, economically, or any other way. All of her husband's needs are met. He doesn't need anything dishonest or unworthy.

vs. 12. **"She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life."** (Pr 31:12)

She will do him good: ripen him; to wean; to mature. She brings out the very best in him. Note: God intended people to live two by two. In individual cases, his providence sometimes is different, and people do find blessing and strength in the unmarried state; but this is God's general will. For the safety and the order of the race, there is to be sexual monopoly in marriage. The choice is abstinence or marriage: everything else is death and confusion. If you cannot contain, the Bible says to get married. Marriage is God's cure for sexual sin.

vs. 13. **"She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands."** (Pr 31:13)

Works willingly: as to satisfy a debt. She is no lazy ornament about the house, but a positive economic asset. The normal thing for everyone is to pull their own weight. Division of labor: necessity for nurturing of children.

vs. 14-15 **"14 She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar. 15 She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens."** (Pr 31:14-15)

She sees that the household is managed well and well supplied. She is a nurturer: for both body and soul. This doesn't mean that in every family the woman is to be the cook--that does not follow from this; but it does underscore the woman's nurturing gifts.

vs. 16. **“She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.”** (Pr 31:16)

The woman's place is the home: yes, and the vineyard too. And the world markets (vs. 14) and industry (vs. 13) See verse 24

vs. 17. **“She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.”** (Pr 31:17)  
strengthened = virtuous

vs. 18-19. **“She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night. 19 She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.”** (Pr 31:18-19)  
commercial enterprises: merchandise = gain profit from sale:

vs. 20: **“She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.”** (Pr 31:20)  
"hands" in verse 20 means "open hands" power, direction. Poor: in body or in mind: she is a counselor.

Vs. 21, 22 **“She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. 22 She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple.”** (Pr 31:21-22)  
Her household is well clothed and prosperous because of her diligence and wisdom.

vs. 23: **“Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.”** (Pr 31:23)  
sits with elders" idea of solidity; he is secure. He is able to engage in public affairs, because of the economic strength of the house. It is a house of substance, stable, and strong. He is among the honored of the land.

vs. 14, 25 **“She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. 25 Strength and honor are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.”** (Pr 31:24-25)  
strength: a tower; strength; honor: a rising up; elevation Her joy is in the future and her future is secure.

vs. 26: **“She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.”** (Pr 31:26)  
kindness = mercy She has learned to have a merciful mouth: what a blessing this is; to have our speech seasoned with grace. She is a wise and kind woman. Some wise people are not kind; and some kind people are not wise. What a blessing to have both in one skin. Maybe one of the reasons her husband is esteemed in the gates is because of the wisdom of his wife. He listens to her, for he knows the strength of her heart and mind.

She doesn't rattle on and on about nothing; but a sober heart gives soberness to her speech. Her words are well chosen and wise; and she is well worth listening to. She has something worthwhile to say, and people will seek her out of hear it.

vs. 27. **“She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.”**  
(Pr 31:27)<DL

"looketh well" Peers into the distance; foresees things; does not live for the present.  
the ways: the road traveled; she sees the end of the way that her children take; she is a rock of strength to her husband in counsel and advice. Helps him to see the end.

idleness: gentle, at peace; but don't mess with this person; for peace and contentment are not in her vocabulary when her people are at issue.

She looks well to the ways of her household: What a woman!

vs. 28,9 **“Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.”** (Pr 31:28, 9)

praise her: boasts; celebrates; he raves about her. She feels that she is loved and valued and respected. She is most blessed and revered. She is not an airhead, and dipsy doodle, and a frivolous fool, but sober, reverent, wise, discreet, and good.

vs. 30. 31 **“Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised. 31 Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.”** (Pr 31:30-31)

deceitful: a swelling up--you think there is more there than there is. vain: like a vapor; empty.

praise: means shine; source of the word for Hallelujah, praise to God. First time it was used in the Bible was when the men of Egypt praised Sarah for her beauty. Like a star in the sky shines.

vs. 31: **“Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.”**  
(Pr 31:31)

Her own works: Noah: this same shall comfort us in the works.... Psalm 90:17 "establish the work of our hands" Man AND WOMEN are called to work. This has nothing to do with economic or social condition: This is one of the greatest gifts of the reformation and is in danger of being eroded today. This is the reason for the tremendous explosion of economic wealth that has blessed the whole world.

Good women, just as good men, are hard to find; and if you find one, you have found a good thing: Proverbs 18:22. Good means: The greatest thing; The abuse of a wife is an affront against God, and will bring the wrath of God upon a man. Men are to honor and respect woman and not speak or think ill of them. “She thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.”

Noah found grace: favor. A good wife is the gift of God; As with all of God's gifts, he does not give one to every man; if you have received one; be grateful to God.

Conclusion: Psalm 60:9-12 **“Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom? 10 Wilt not thou, O God, which hadst cast us off? and thou, O God, which didst not go out with our armies? 11 Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man. 12 Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies. (Ps 60:9-12)**

Through God we will do powerful (virtuous) things.  
May God bless you.

Amen and Amen.