

# An Excellent Wife, Who Can Find?

## The Heart of Her Husband Safely Trusts Her (Proverbs 31:10-31)

What kind of wife will help her husband and her family get to heaven?

King Lemuel's mother (Prov 31:1-2) described in detail the perfect wife for her son.

Every woman should aspire to this description, every man should seek to marry such a woman.

**“An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels” (31:10 ESV).**

- The word *excellent* (*hayil*) can mean “strength, capability, valor, or dignity.”
- She has strong and noble character, great competence, and a courageous commitment to God and her family.

**In what ways is the excellent wife so rare, and her value far above rubies?**

### I. Her Husband Safely Trusts Her

**Proverbs 31:11-12 ( NKJV )** The heart of her husband safely trusts her; So he will have no lack of gain (*lit. no need of spoil*). She does him good and not evil all the days of her life.

#### A. Above all she is trustworthy, so her husband has no doubts or fears about her.

- Because she fears God (31:30), she does what is right regardless of circumstances, temptations, or opportunities to compromise.
- She can be trusted personally, domestically, economically, sexually, socially, and spiritually.
- She would never take advantage of her husband or neglect any of his needs.

#### B. A husband risks his heart with his wife.

1. **She can break his heart by giving her love to another** (Num 5:11-31 - the law of jealousy)
2. **She can defraud him of admiration or sexual fulfillment.**

**Proverbs 5:18-19 ( ESV )** <sup>18</sup>Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth, <sup>19</sup>a lovely deer, a graceful doe. Let her breasts fill you at all times with delight; be intoxicated always in her love.

**1 Corinthians 7:2-5 ( ESV )** <sup>2</sup>But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. <sup>3</sup>The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. <sup>4</sup>For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. <sup>5</sup>Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

3. **She can cause him sorrow by being selfish and lazy and mean and hateful and causing the family to suffer.**

**Proverbs 14:1 ( NKJV )** <sup>1</sup>The wise woman builds her house, But the foolish pulls it down with her hands.

**Proverbs 30:21-23 ( ESV )** <sup>21</sup>Under three things the earth trembles; under four it cannot bear up: <sup>22</sup>a slave when he becomes king, and a fool when he is filled with food; <sup>23</sup>an unloved (*odious, hateful*) woman when she gets a husband, and a maidservant when she displaces her mistress.

4. **She can be hateful, contentious, and shameful in private and in public.**

**Proverbs 21:9 ( NKJV )** <sup>9</sup>Better to dwell in a corner of a housetop, than in a house shared with a contentious woman.

**Proverbs 21:19 ( NKJV )** <sup>19</sup>Better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and angry woman.

**Proverbs 27:15-16 ( NKJV )** <sup>15</sup>A continual dripping on a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike; <sup>16</sup>Whoever restrains her restrains the wind, and grasps oil with his right hand.

**Proverbs 12:4 ( NKJV )** <sup>4</sup>An excellent wife *is* the crown of her husband, but she who causes shame *is* like rottenness in his bones.

**C. Spoil is the stuff taken from an enemy in war.** The husband of a trustworthy wife will be so fully supplied that he won't need anything else.

- A domestically defrauded husband is tempted to covetousness, or overworking, or even theft to make up for losses caused by his wife.
- A sexually defrauded husband is tempted to engage in fantasy, pornography, or even adultery.
- Women can be personally spoiled, sexually selfish, domestically lazy, financially wasteful, or verbally disrespectful. Any one of these sins can build mistrust and fear and eventually break a man's heart.

**D. A man married to a virtuous woman who fears God and does righteousness has his heart totally at rest.**

- He is fully confident in all she thinks and does. She does him good and not evil all the days of her life.
- The ultimate happiness for a man in this world of sin is the love he gives and receives in marriage.

## II. HER SPIRITUAL PRIORITIES

<sup>30</sup> Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.

<sup>31</sup> Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates.

- "Charm" and "beauty" alone are "deceitful" and "vain." Men often choose a wife for a frivolous reason like beauty, but, ironically, this can add to mistrust and jealousy.
- To a spiritually-minded man, a woman's *real* attraction is her reverence for God. Is it any wonder that her husband trusts her?
  - He knows that she will be faithful to him because he sees that she is faithful to God. She is worthy of his full confidence. She is "the crown of her husband" (12:4).
  - Know assuredly that the future of your heart as well as the future of your children depend on the spiritual focus and commitment of the woman you choose to marry, the woman you choose to become the mother of your children.

## III. HER SELFLESS SERVICE

<sup>13</sup> She seeks wool and flax, and works with willing hands.

<sup>14</sup> She is like the ships of the merchant; she brings her food from afar.

<sup>15</sup> She rises while it is yet night and provides food for her household and portions for her maidens.

- (v. 13) She works hard with "willing hands." She takes care of and manages her home without complaining.
- (v. 14) She launches out "like a merchant ship" to obtain the food and clothing her family needs.

- (v. 15) She “rises while it is yet night” to do what needs to be done for her family and for those who serve alongside her in the household.

#### **IV. HER SOUND JUDGMENT**

<sup>16</sup> She considers a field and buys it; with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard.

<sup>17</sup> She dresses herself with strength and makes her arms strong.

<sup>18</sup> She perceives that her merchandise is profitable. Her lamp does not go out at night.

<sup>19</sup> She puts her hands to the distaff, and her hands hold the spindle.

- (v. 16) She shrewdly “considers a field and buys it” and plants a “vineyard.”
- (vs. 17-18) She has the strength of character to work hard to earn disposable income for her family.
- (v. 19) She labors well into the “night” with her “distaff” and “spindle” to make garments for her family.

#### **V. HER SACRIFICIAL SHARING**

<sup>20</sup> She opens her hand to the poor and reaches out her hands to the needy.

<sup>21</sup> She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household are clothed in scarlet.<sup>£</sup>

<sup>22</sup> She makes bed coverings for herself; her clothing is fine linen and purple.

- (v. 20) This diligent woman gives generously to “the poor” and “the needy.”
- (v. 21) She plans ahead as the snow approaches, making scarlet garments for her household.
- (v. 22) After providing for others, this industrious wife makes “bed coverings” and clothes “for herself” with “fine linen and purple.”
- Her blessings are evidence of God’s favor upon her labors.

#### **VI. HER SUBMISSIVE SUPPORT**

<sup>23</sup> Her husband is known in the gates when he sits among the elders of the land.

<sup>24</sup> She makes linen garments and sells them; she delivers sashes to the merchant.

- (v. 23) In part because of her many virtues, her husband enjoys a position in “the gates” where the city leaders meet.
- (v. 24) Despite being extremely capable, she doesn’t compete with her husband’s leadership. Instead, she is content to subject herself to his headship and build him up and everyone can see how much she admires him.

#### **VII. HER STRENGTH AND DIGNITY**

<sup>25</sup> Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come.

<sup>26</sup> She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.

<sup>27</sup> She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.

- (v. 25) This excellent wife looks to the future with inner “strength” and “dignity.” Even though she faces many challenges, she “laughs” with positive confidence in the Lord’s providential care.
- (v. 26) People regularly seek her counsel, because she speaks words of “wisdom” and “kindness” to them.
- (v. 27) She does all kinds of things outside the home, but she makes sure she doesn’t neglect “her household.”

#### **VIII. HER SECURE STANDING**

<sup>28</sup> Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her:

<sup>29</sup> “Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all.”

- (v. 28) Her children see everything that she does so sacrificially for them and for others; they see her great character and great wisdom “and call her blessed.”
- (v. 29) Her husband also sees her great strength of character and her love for people, and “praises her: Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all.”
- In his eyes, as it should be, there are NONE who can claim to be her equal.

## **CONCLUSION**

<sup>30</sup> Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.

<sup>31</sup> Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates.