



The Virtuous Woman - Part 1

The description of the virtuous woman in Proverbs 31 is probably one of the most preached about topics from that book. Once a year this passage is dedicated to women in many countries during the month of May and for those of us in Costa Rica, the month of August. I like to double dip and celebrate both dates! Who doesn't like a nice meal out without having to prepare it yourself?

We are going to take a look at this chapter in Proverbs and try to dissect what is being taught. This wisdom that is being passed on from mother to son has uplifted many women and has equally torn many down. It is written by a King named Lemuel who was taught in song or poem called an oracle passed on to him from his mother.

Many believe that King Lemuel is in fact, King Solomon. Which in turn would declare the mother to be Queen Bathsheba. Could it be the various scandals that Bathsheba saw in her lifetime taught her the importance of teaching her son these words of wisdom? Regardless of who it really was, we have been given a great gift. Wisdom that we can glean from, passed on from one generation to the next.

Yet, just who is this Proverbs 31 woman?

Is she real? This virtuous woman accomplishes so many tasks that would intimidate most women, no matter what time in history you are from! In

theory, it is possible that she lived during King Solomon's days. In reality, it is more likely that her attributes are only examples of what the king was to look for in a woman. With the most important character trait being, one who seeks to live her life pleasing to YHWH. The fact that these words of wisdom were passed on in an oracle seems to support the latter.

Let's just say that she was real. Let's do some role play and try to gain understanding of who she is. What would happen if she was challenged with the negatives that life throws out at some of us? Let's face it, it is pretty easy to display kindness, love, and generosity when life is "good".

We all start out with beautiful dreams and visions of what we will be doing and sometimes of what we may even look like when we grow old. For so many, those dreams transform into hardships and unexpected tragedies along the way. What once were perfectly planned happy endings, never wanting the moment to end, are now blurred visions of thinking "How am I going to run this race and make it until the end?"

I wonder if this Woman of Valor had to endure hardships. So many of us have struggles we have come out of, are in the midst of, or will be thrown into. How are we to endure or cope with them? How would she have responded to finding out the news that her child was physically or mentally challenged? Loss of a child? What about budget struggles? A spouse's lack of leadership in spirituality, teen rebellion, stepmom struggles, or a chronic illness in her or a loved one? How would she endure or cope with them? Better yet, how can we? What virtues does this woman have that can help encourage us and empower us to get through and even overcome these struggles?

Examining Her Heart

The first 3 verses we are introduced to speak about marriage. First and foremost, please understand you do not need to be married to benefit from these verses. It does not matter if you are single, married, a single mom, or a step-mom because this is still applicable for all. These traits

come from within us. They do not come out because we "have" a husband but because of who we are.

Prov. 31:10 An excellent wife who can find?
She is far more precious than jewels.

I love this verse! I am reminded of a popular credit card that put out a series of commercials spread out over many years. Do you remember the "Priceless" commercials? The running of those particular ads may or may not be over but the point has been made. The ad starts out with 3 items listing their prices. Within the mini storyline, the last item listed (or punchline) is that of a circumstance in which is always given the value as priceless.

I did a search on other "priceless" comparisons in the scriptures. Here are a few that gives a little more understanding of being that excellent wife.

Prov. 10:20 The tongue of the righteous is choice silver;
the heart of the wicked is of little worth.

The words that we speak will be a sign of what is in our heart. This is even referenced in Luke 6:45 (Show reference, NOT full verse of Luke)

Now let's look at:

Job 28:12-19 “But where shall wisdom be found?
And where is the place of understanding?

Job 28:13 Man does not know its worth,
and it is not found in the land of the living.

Job 28:17 Gold and glass cannot equal it,
nor can it be exchanged for jewels of fine gold.

Job 28:18 No mention shall be made of coral or of crystal;
the price of wisdom is above pearls.

Job 28:19 The topaz of Ethiopia cannot equal it,
nor can it be valued in pure gold.

Wisdom- There is no price that can be tagged on it. Just as in the commercial...Priceless.

Here is another verse in Job 28 that describes wisdom.

Job 28:28 And he said to man,
 ‘Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom,
 and to turn away from evil is understanding.’”

We are told here exactly what Wisdom is. It is the fear of YHWH that gives this excellent wife her worth. That makes her more precious than jewels. It is the very thing that MAKES her excellent.

So, how does "the fear of YHWH" look like walking it out in real life? The fear of YHWH is all about measuring up our attitudes, fears, desires, shortcomings, strengths, and actions to line up with Yah's instructions. What do we personally hold onto that keeps us from experiencing all that our Heavenly Father is wanting to lead us in? Insecurity... like what Moses experienced of not wanting to speak in front of others? A lack of self control in finances that is bringing harm to your family? What is in your walk that is preventing you from being sharpened in Yah's ways? It is only when we evaluate ourselves by taking the time to read and meditate on YHWH's words that we will have the knowledge and the strength to dissolve the negatives that are running and most often ruining the life that He has purposed for us.

Is. 50:10 Who among you fears YHWH
 and obeys the voice of his servant?
 Let him who walks in darkness
 and has no light
 trust in the name of YHWH
 and rely on his God.

If you are stumbling through a dark place right now, turn your eyes to Yah and allow Him to restore you to the peace of mind that only He can

cover you with. Sometimes we get caught up in petty circumstances that slowly takes us away from experiencing the joy that comes from Him. Sometimes there are much heavier circumstances, as in a loss of a loved one. Whichever place you might be in, I encourage you to cry out to the Father. He is waiting for you.

Psalm 112:1 Praise YHWH!

Blessed is the man who fears YHWH,
who greatly delights in his commandments!

Everything that we will come to understand through this study of the Virtuous Woman is that all of our actions must first come from having a heart that fears YHWH. Unless we have that, there is no need to further our studies of her. We will continue studying the life of this priceless woman, going through the rest of Proverbs 31.

I'm looking forward to growing and learning with you!

We hope you have enjoyed this teaching. Now it's up to you to be a Berean and study it for yourself. That's the only way to grow.

Until next time, Shalom.

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