

The ABC's of a Good Wife and Mother

"Who can find a virtuous woman?" Proverbs 31:10

The most famous passage of Scripture about mothers is Proverbs 31:10-31. This passage describing the virtuous woman has 22 verses and each verse starts with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet, beginning with **A**leph, **B**eth, **G**immel, **D**aleth, and so on. We can therefore refer to this text as "The ABC's of a good wife and mother".

These words describing a virtuous woman were not composed by a man, but rather by a woman, King Lemuel's mother. She indicated that the virtuous woman is rare, just like a highly prized, rare gem. This passage is not to be used as a measuring stick to find fault with a woman, or as an "impossible to obtain list" to overwhelm and depress a woman, but a goal, **an ideal** for women to strive to attain. Virtue does not happen overnight nor are we born with it—virtue is a result of time and maturity. A young man looking for a wife cannot expect to find **perfection**; rather he must look for **direction**.

Interestingly, nothing is mentioned of the virtuous woman's outward beauty, only her **inward beauty** is referred to. This is in keeping with the exhortation of I Peter 3:3-4, *"Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."* Having the proper emphasis on inward beauty does not exclude giving attention to the outward person, for we are told she was a careful dresser, *"She maketh herself covering of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple"* (v. 22). In verse 30 we are reminded that, *"Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised"*. London or Paris would never admit it, but the best beauty treatment is the fear of the LORD!

Although **the grace of God** is not specifically mentioned, it is clearly present as we see God producing integrity, wisdom, character, and grace in the virtuous woman's life. These qualities are not found in an unregenerate woman's life. This type of woman brings praise to God and is praised by God. Friend, you have nothing to fear in surrendering to the grace of God. Let Him make something beautiful out of your life.

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