

Read Proverbs 31:10-31 (The woman with wisdom or woman of noble character)

The book of Proverbs was mainly written by Solomon. But the last two chapters were not by Solomon. This chapter was written by King Lemuel in a format of a Jewish poem. Jewish poem has several structures. Much like poems from different countries where they have different structures. This Jewish poem has some repeated ideas and can be found repeatedly in each sub-section (different verses not necessary in sequence).

This chapter applies not just to wives, but for any woman. It is an ideal case for woman to aim for. Please read the cited verses in each section before reading the discussion. Total 7 main themes.

1. Verses 10-12 (Supportive and trustworthy woman)

The theme: a supportive and trustworthy/dependable wife is a great blessing to the husband. It's worth is not measurable.

Verse 11 stated the wife did things so well that the husband has full **confidence** on her. He is confident of her performing all she is responsible for and beyond.

Questions to you:

Do you know does your husband has confidence in you? Do you know does your husband agree that you bring him **good** always? If you are not married, do your family members have confidence in you?

For husbands, do you only admit your wife's greatness inside your heart, or express it out to affirm and appreciate her?

2. Verses 13, 19 & 27 (Hard worker)

At that time period and culture, woman's main duties are doing the sewing, cooking and household work. The key point here is one should be a hard worker.

Do you think both you and your husband agree that you did well on what was the agreed upon chores?

Wives, are you eager and happy to do all those works or you do it reluctantly?

For husbands, the Bible calls for **love** your wife. Do you help and support her willingly?

3. Verses 15 and 21 (Work diligently beyond hardship)

The key points here are 1) to take extra effort, and 2) have good preparation and planning including delegating tasks in the family and household that is in her authority.

Wives, do you plan ahead and prepare for the whole family?

Husbands, do you see what she did and support & comfort her or do you still complain?

4. Verses 14, 16, 18 & 24 (Good planning, leadership and negotiation skills)

This involves hard working, wisdom, planning, leadership, business and negotiation skills. You can see in that time period that woman is not just to do household chores. Woman's tasks have not really change since the Old Testament time, which includes tasks beyond household chores like business and enterprise.

Do you do extra investing besides your full-time duty? Do you have a learning attitude to improve your skills?

5. Verse 20 (Helping others)

After you read verses 14, 16, 18 & 24, you might think why she needs to learn all those skills and work very hard. It is for the household and helping the others.

Do you have the heart to help others?

Is it one of your goal in life to help others besides your family?

6. Verses 17, 22, 25 & 26 (Take care of yourself, well respected by others and enjoy what God has given)

Many points described in the above 4 verses:

- 1) It describes how she knew her duty also includes taking care of herself. She needs to develop and exercise herself (physical, emotional and spiritual) in order to serve the family and others.
- 2) Able to project an excellent image -People see her and know that she is physically well, intellectually wise and well respected. Her words and action are kind. She is a person with moral and dignity.
- 3) Enjoy what she has accomplished (enjoy God's blessing on her). Example here is fine clothing.

Do you take care of yourself and do exercise for physical wellness, emotional control and spiritual growth?

7. Verses 23, 28, 29, 30 & 31(woman that follows God will be blessed)

She got praised from people. She is a partner in her husband's work/ministry where she is her helper. Even her husband got respected in public due to her.

The summary is Woman that follows God will be blessed and praised, and people around her will also be blessed. Woman that follows God reveals her internal beauty.

(Note, you might ask how can a woman be like this that she seems so restless. If she really follows God as stated in verse 30, she will respect the Sabbath day. She will take rest as God intended for her.)