

PROVERBS: ALIGNING TO GOD'S FIXED MORAL ORDER

Part III: Displaying God's Fixed Moral Order

W. Viewing Specific Proverbs Of God's Fixed Moral Order

(Proverbs 31:10-31)

I. Introduction

- A. After motivating a young man to heed an observed fixed moral order, the literary genre of the Egyptian *sboyet* that the book of Proverbs uses works to supply actual proverbs to reveal that order, cf. Bruce Waltke, "The Book of Proverbs and Ancient Wisdom Literature," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 136:543, p. 221-238.
- B. Solomon reveals that order to be **God's** order for his son to heed. We continue our study of that order.
- C. However, clarification is in order on the Proverbs 31:10-31 section on a virtuous wife: scholars assert it has no **known** author, *Bib. Know. Com., O.T.*, p. 972. However, Jesus implied in Matthew 23:35 that all of this section is canonical Scripture as it belongs to the 39 canonical books of the Old Testament (cf. *Ryrie Study Bible, KJV*, fn. to Mtt. 23:35). Thus, we accept this passage as Scripture.
- D. Accordingly, **we view Proverbs 31:10-31 to see what constitutes a virtuous wife so that a son knows what to seek in a wife, and what and HOW a young WOMAN can function to be truly blessed:**

II. Viewing Specific Proverbs Of God's Fixed Moral Order From Proverbs 31:10-31.

- A. The **basis** of gaining the blessings of the wife described in this poem is noted in Proverbs 31:30: the Hebrew text says, ". . . but a woman who *fears Jahweh*, she (emphatic position of the pronoun) will be praised!" (Kittel, ed., *Biblia Hebraica*, p. 1194) **Hence, the virtues and accomplishments of the woman herein described GROW OUT OF an attitude that RESPECTS the God of Scripture.**
- B. By examining Exodus 20:18-20 with Deuteronomy 28:1-14, we learn **why** such respect for God blesses:
 1. Under the Mosaic Covenant in Israel's era, and during the era of this acrostic poem's authorship, God revealed that anyone in Israel who feared Jahweh would tend to obey Him, Exodus 20:18-20.
 2. Such obedience produced automatic divine blessings under the Mosaic Covenant, Deut. 28:1-14.
 3. Hence, the woman who respects the God of Scripture to the point that she obeys Him automatically finds God blessing and uplifting her every effort as described in Proverbs 31:10-31.
- C. Such blessings of this woman are **enumerated** in Proverbs 31:10-31 in its **cultural** context as follows:
 1. She is not left unwed in what is seen as social impoverishment in Ancient Near Eastern culture: rather, she is highly prized as a wife and is gained by a dowry of the most costly sort (rubies), Prov. 31:10.
 2. Her husband fully trusts her moral and ethical character, granting her peace in her marriage, 31:11a.
 3. She manages her household in such a way that her husband finds her to be a wholesome asset, 31:11b:
 - a. She does not bring him calamity, but wholesome prosperity all of her earthly (*chayeyah*) life, 31:12.
 - b. She is incredibly industrious, seeing God bless every household chore, 31:13-15, 19, 21-22, 27.
 - c. This virtuous wife excels even in extending her business affairs outside of the home, 31:16-18, 24.
 - d. Consequently, she is prepared for future needs due to wise planning for the future, Prov. 31:25.
 - e. Her care to meet the needs of the impoverished in her neighborhood yield blessings for all, 31:20.
 - f. Her words then mean something to others who view her as a successful wife, Proverbs 31:26.
 - g. Due to her influence, even her husband gains honor and position as a judge at the city gates, 31:23.
 - h. Consequently, her children and husband rise up to bless and honor her, Proverbs 31:28-29.
 4. In the end, **regardless** of **personality** weaknesses (*chayn*, cf. *Theol. Wordbook of the O. T.*, v. I, p. 303) or **fleeting physical beauty** she might know, such a wife is honored: she is honored for respecting the Lord, and in turn obeying Him to gain His blessing in her life, Proverbs 31:30-31.

Lesson: **THOUGH** today's woman is **not** **AUTOMATICALLY** promised the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant as was the woman described in Proverbs 31:10-31, **today's** wife who **RESPECTS** the God of Scripture to the point that she **HEEDS** His Word will enjoy God's blessings in her life, John 14:21, 23.

Application: **BOTH** young men **AND** young **WOMEN** can pay heed here, and though the **CONTEXT** of Proverbs 31:10-31 differs from ours, the **LESSON** still applies: (1) as a young man who wants a truly great marriage and family life, he should marry a woman who respects and obeys God. (2) As a young woman, irrespective of any fears she might have in lacking physical or personality attractiveness, she should respect and obey the Lord. He will bless so that her life is blessed in a most comprehensive way!