

The words of King Lemuel. An oracle that his mother taught him:

<sup>2</sup>What are you doing, my son? What are you doing, son of my womb? What are you doing, son of my vows?

<sup>3</sup>Do not give your strength to women,  
your ways to those who destroy kings.

<sup>4</sup>It is not for kings, O Lemuel,  
it is not for kings to drink wine,  
or for rulers to take strong drink,

<sup>5</sup>lest they drink and forget what has been decreed  
and pervert the rights of all the afflicted.

<sup>6</sup>Give strong drink to the one who is perishing,  
and wine to those in bitter distress;

<sup>7</sup>let them drink and forget their poverty  
and remember their misery no more.

<sup>8</sup>Open your mouth for the mute,  
for the rights of all who are destitute.

<sup>9</sup>Open your mouth, judge righteously,  
defend the rights of the poor and needy.

<sup>10</sup>An excellent wife who can find?

She is far more precious than jewels.

<sup>11</sup>The heart of her husband trusts in her,  
and he will have no lack of gain.

<sup>12</sup>She does him good, and not harm,  
all the days of her life.

<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.

<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.

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

<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.

<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.

<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."

<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.

# Working Life

'Wisdom at work'

Proverbs 31

## The foolish man at work (v1-9)

- the abuse of sex

- the abuse of drink

- the abuse of power

⇒ don't play the fool at work

⇒ do look to the perfect King

## The wise woman at work (v10-31)

- wisdom at work

⇒ be the wise worker

⇒ praise the wise worker

⇒ marry the wise worker

