

Proverbs

(Those who choose wisdom and follow God will be blessed in numerous ways.)



Proverbs 31

*When one finds a worthy wife, her value is far beyond pearls.
Her husband, entrusting his heart to her,
has an unfailing prize.
She brings him good, and not evil, all the days of her life.*

Proverbs 31:10-12

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Knowledge is an accumulation of raw facts, but wisdom is the ability to see people, events, and situations as God sees them. In the Book of Proverbs, the mind of God is revealed in matters high and lofty and in common, ordinary, everyday situations as well. It appears that no topic escapes attention. Summarizing the Book of Proverbs is difficult for unlike many other books of Scripture, there is no particular plot or storyline found in its pages; nor are there any principal characters found in the book. It is wisdom that takes center stage— a grand, divine wisdom that transcends the whole of history, peoples and cultures. The theme of wisdom and its necessity in our lives finds its fulfillment in Christ. In Proverbs we are exhorted that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Both the Latin and English translation of each line of the verse will be outlined, along with a brief Catholic explanation of that line of the verse.

Proverbs 31

{31:1} Verba Lamuelis regis. Visio, qua erudit eum mater sua.

{31:1} The words of king Lamuel. The vision by which his mother instructed him:

¹ The sayings of Lemuel king of Massa, taught him by his mother:

{31:2} Quid dilecte mi, quid dilecte uteri mei, quid dilecte votorum meorum?

{31:2} “What, O my beloved? What, O beloved of my womb? What, O beloved of my vows?

² What, my son! What, son of my womb! What, son of my vows!

{31:3} Ne dederis mulieribus substantiam tuam, et divitias tuas ad delendos reges.

{31:3} Do not give your substance to women, or your riches to overthrow kings.

³ Do not expend your energy on women nor your wealth on those who ruin kings.

{31:4} Noli regibus, O Lamuel, noli regibus dare vinum: quia nullum secretum est ubi regnat ebrietas.

{31:4} Not to kings, O Lamuel, not to kings give wine. For there are no secrets where drunkenness reigns.

⁴ Not for kings, O Lemuel, not for kings the drinking of wine, not for princes the love of liquor,

{31:30} Fallax gratia, et vana est pulchritudo: mulier timens Dominum ipsa laudabitur.

{31:30} Charm is false, and beauty is vain. The woman who fears the Lord, the same shall be praised.

³⁰ Charm is deceitful, and beauty empty; the woman who fears Yahweh is the one to praise.

{31:31} Date ei de fructu manuum suarum: et laudent eam in portis opera eius.

{31:31} Give to her from the fruit of her own hands. And let her works praise her at the gates.

³¹ Give her a share in what her hands have worked for, and let her works tell her praises at the city gates.

End of Proverbs 31

{31:24} Sindonem fecit, et vendidit, et cingulum tradidit Chanaanæo.

{31:24} She has made finely woven cloth and sold it, and she has delivered a waistband to the Canaanite.

~ The word 'cingulum' refers to something that encircles or wraps; in this context, it is made of cloth. It could conceivably be anything from a headband to an undergarment.

²⁴ She weaves materials and sells them, she supplies the merchant with sashes.

{31:25} Fortitudo et decor indumentum eius, et ridebit in die novissimo.

{31:25} Strength and elegance are her clothing, and she will laugh in the final days.

²⁵ She is clothed in strength and dignity, she can laugh at the day to come.

{31:26} Os suum aperuit sapientiæ, et lex clementiæ in lingua eius.

{31:26} She has opened her mouth to wisdom, and the law of clemency is on her tongue.

²⁶ When she opens her mouth, she does so wisely; on her tongue is kindly instruction.

{31:27} Consideravit semitas domus suæ, et panem otiosa non comedit.

{31:27} She has considered the paths of her household, and she has not eaten her bread in idleness.

²⁷ She keeps good watch on the conduct of her household, no bread of idleness for her.

{31:28} Surrexerunt filii eius, et beatissimam prædicaverunt: vir eius, et laudavit eam.

{31:28} Her sons rose up and predicted great happiness; her husband rose up and praised her.

~ Or, 'Her sons rose up and proclaimed her most blessed;'

²⁸ Her children stand up and proclaim her blessed, her husband, too, sings her praises:

{31:29} Multæ filiæ congregaverunt divitias: tu supergressa es universas.

{31:29} Many daughters have gathered together riches; you have surpassed them all.

²⁹ 'Many women have done admirable things, but you surpass them all!'

{31:5} Et ne forte bibant, et obliviscantur iudiciorum, et mutant causam filiorum pauperis.

{31:5} And perhaps they may drink and forget judgments, and alter the case of the sons of the poor.

⁵ for fear that in liquor they forget what they have decreed and pervert the course of justice against all the poor.

{31:6} Date siceram mœrentibus, et vinum his, qui amaro sunt animo:

{31:6} Give strong drink to the grieving, and wine to those who are bitter in soul.

⁶ Procure strong drink for someone about to die, wine for him whose heart is heavy:

{31:7} bibant, et obliviscantur egestatis suæ, et doloris sui non recordentur amplius.

{31:7} Let them drink, and forget their needs, and remember their sorrow no more.

⁷ let him drink and forget his misfortune, and remember his misery no more.

{31:8} Aperi os tuum muto, et causis omnium filiorum qui pertranseunt:

{31:8} Open your mouth for the mute and for all the cases of the sons who are passing through.

⁸ Make your views heard, on behalf of the dumb, on behalf of all the unwanted;

{31:9} aperi os tuum, decerne quod iustum est, et iudica inopem et pauperem.

{31:9} Open your mouth, declare what is just, and do justice to the indigent and the poor.

⁹ make your views heard, pronounce an upright verdict, defend the cause of the poor and the wretched.

{31:10} Mulierem fortem quis inveniet? procul, et de ultimis finibus pretium eius.

{31:10} Who shall find a strong woman? Far away, and from the furthest parts, is her price.

¹⁰ The truly capable woman -- who can find her? She is far beyond the price of pearls.

{31:11} Confidit in ea cor viri sui, et spoliis non indigebit.

{31:11} The heart of her husband confides in her, and he will not be deprived of spoils.

¹¹ Her husband's heart has confidence in her, from her he will derive no little profit.

{31:12} Reddet ei bonum, et non malum, omnibus diebus vitæ suæ.

{31:12} She will repay him with good, and not evil, all the days of her life.

¹² Advantage and not hurt she brings him all the days of her life.

{31:13} Quæsit lanam et linum, et operata est consilia manuum suarum.

{31:13} She has sought wool and flax, and she has worked these by the counsel of her hands.

¹³ She selects wool and flax, she does her work with eager hands.

{31:14} Facta est quasi navis institoris, de longe portans panem suum.

{31:14} She has become like a merchant's ship, bringing her bread from far away.

¹⁴ She is like those merchant vessels, bringing her food from far away.

{31:15} Et de nocte surrexit, deditque prædam domesticis suis, et cibaria ancillis suis.

{31:15} And she has risen in the night, and given a prey to her household, and provisions to her maids.

¹⁵ She gets up while it is still dark giving her household their food, giving orders to her serving girls.

{31:16} Consideravit agrum, et emit eum: de fructu manuum suarum plantavit vineam.

{31:16} She has considered a field and bought it. From the fruit of her own hands, she has planted a vineyard.

¹⁶ She sets her mind on a field, then she buys it; with what her hands have earned she plants a vineyard.

{31:17} Accinxit fortitudine lumbos suos, et roboravit brachium suum.

{31:17} She has wrapped her waist with fortitude, and she has strengthened her arm.

¹⁷ She puts her back into her work and shows how strong her arms can be.

{31:18} Gustavit, et vidit quia bona est negotiatio eius: non extinguetur in nocte lucerna eius.

{31:18} She has tasted and seen that her tasks are good; her lamp shall not be extinguished at night.

¹⁸ She knows that her affairs are going well; her lamp does not go out at night.

{31:19} Manum suam misit ad fortia, et digiti eius apprehenderunt fusum.

{31:19} She has put her hand to strong things, and her fingers have taken hold of the spindle.

¹⁹ She sets her hands to the distaff, her fingers grasp the spindle.

{31:20} Manum suam aperuit inopi, et palmas suas extendit ad pauperem.

{31:20} She has opened her hand to the needy, and she has extended her hands to the poor.

²⁰ She holds out her hands to the poor, she opens her arms to the needy.

{31:21} Non timebit domui suæ a frigoribus nivis: omnes enim domestici eius vestiti sunt duplicibus.

{31:21} She shall not fear, in the cold of snow, for her household. For all those of her household have been clothed two-fold.

²¹ Snow may come, she has no fears for her household, with all her servants warmly clothed.

{31:22} Stragulatam vestem fecit sibi: byssus, et purpura indumentum eius.

{31:22} She has made embroidered clothing for herself. Fine linen and purple is her garment.

²² She makes her own quilts, she is dressed in fine linen and purple.

{31:23} Nobilis in portis vir eius, quando sederit cum senatoribus terræ.

{31:23} Her husband is noble at the gates, when he sits among the senators of the land.

²³ Her husband is respected at the city gates, taking his seat among the elders of the land.