

“On the Way” 365 Bible Reading Plan

PROVERBS 31

Proverbs 31

Proverbs thirty-one is known as the “Virtuous Woman” proverb. It extols the virtues of a godly woman, wife and mother. What many do not know about in the customs and cultures of the west and in Christian churches, is that the virtuous woman of Proverbs thirty-one is talked about each week in Jewish homes. Jews down through the centuries have sought to develop patterns of teaching truth of Law, the Prophets and the Writings, what Christians call the “Old Testament.” God gave instructions to the Jews to keep the Sabbath and pass that down to their children. The purpose of keeping the Sabbath then and now is to teach that God is the creator and sustainer of all of life and that everyone, in every generation is accountable to Him.

A portion of the keeping of the Sabbath ritual in each Jewish home each week is to bless the children. This is done by speaking and sometimes placing hands on them and asking for God’s provision and protection, while giving thanks. The male children are asked to be blessed as Ephraim and Manasseh, the two sons of Joseph, who received a double portion of Joseph’s inheritance portion. The female children of the family are blessed by asking God to make them as fruitful and blessed as

Sarah, Rebekah, Leah, and Rachel, the wives of the patriarchs of the faith. After the children are blessed, then the husband will “rise and call blessed” his wife and will liken her to the virtuous woman of Proverbs thirty-one. He will usually end the blessing by saying the familiar verse, **“Many daughters have done nobly, but you excel them all. Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised. Give her the product of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates.”** (Proverbs 31:29-31)

How wonderful it would be for each married couple and every son and daughter to hear words of blessing from those they love most. Children certainly need to hear their names called in love and affectionate blessing. But what it would do for marriages if the man would learn to bless his wife and speak kindness and encouragement to her.

Prayer and Action Steps

Dear God in heaven, thank you for giving me a virtuous woman (women) in my life. Please help me this day to stop long enough to speak a word of blessing to the “Virtuous Woman” in my life. Amen

Date _____ Scripture _____

- *Read the chapter. If you have time, read it again.*
- *Highlight, underline or circle the Key Verse or Verses of the chapter.*
- *Ask yourself these questions as you read through the chapter.*

Is this historical narrative, analogy, metaphor, allegory, or some other element of speech or communicating truth?

What is the Context? Old Testament? New Testament? What is the writer speaking or writing about? To whom is he writing?

Is this a clear passage of Scripture (can only be interpreted one way)? Or could the passage be interpreted legitimately, in two or more ways, according to grammar and context?

Does the passage teach a Biblical Precept; that is, tells you something to be, do or act?

Are there principles in this chapter that if followed, would require me to change my attitudes or actions?

Does the passage give a Biblical Pattern that is followed here and other places in the Bible?
