Ten Mothers & Ten Rules

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"The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him."

Proverbs 31:1

Proverbs 31 is by far the most definitive and thorough description of an exceptional mother found in the Bible.

Introduction:

A. It is Mother's Day in our nation; we seldom and only indirectly allow a calendar to affect our topics.
B. My main purpose is not to exalt motherhood, flatter mothers, or exhort children to honor mothers.
C. My main purpose is rather to motivate, illustrate, teach, and warn mothers to be the best they can be.
D. There is a huge difference among mothers; great mothers seldom do noble things by natural instinct.
E. A biological mother is a fact of all mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, etc. in differing but similar ways.
F. Common things of motherhood, as conceiving, birthing, nursing, feeding, protecting, etc. are natural.
G. Junkyard dogs make great mothers in these ways … so do gerbils, hyenas, skunks, and even whales.
H. Solomon used this instinctive affection for young with two prostitutes and one baby (I Kgs 3:16-28).
I. Mothers, you must have an aim and action plan far above holding, feeding, playing, and schooling.
J. While those activities may give you childish pleasure, they do not substitute for real mothering.
K. In just two months, it will be five years since my mother departed this world to be with Jesus Christ.
L. I had a great mother in most ways the Bible describes, and I thank God for her godly influence.
M. It is said, Behind every great man is a great woman, and this woman is his mother, not his wife.
N. By time of a wife, his abilities and character are mostly formed; she can hardly influence them then.
O. Rather than be content with animal instincts and pleasures, aim for higher ground of mothering.

TEN EXAMPLE MOTHERS

SARAH … was a holy woman in God's opinion, who followed her husband by faith in God from Ur, conceived by faith in her old age, and ferociously protected her son Isaac.

REBEKAH … beautiful and gracious, trusted God to leave and cleave, sporting wife from start, trusted God while barren, loved the right son, hated marriage to unbelievers.

JOCHEBED … feared God more than Pharoah, knew Moses was special, trusted God for him in a basket, obtained nursing privileges, trusted God for him in Pharaoh's house.

SAMSON'S MOTHER … was honored by an angel, corrected her husband wisely, obeyed the Nazarite rules for her and son, pushed him to marry a Jew, caved in the end.

NAOMI … followed her man to Moab, did not despair at great loss, dealt wisely with daughters, dissuaded to

prove real faith, conspired for marriage, received God's blessing.

HANNAH … was a holy woman that lived by prayer, vowed and paid heavily for a son, won the love of her husband, and trained a son to worship by five years of age.

BATHSHEBA … was a repentant adulteress, loved her repentant husband, doted on Solomon, had three others sons, defended Solomon, but weakly fell for Adonijah's folly.

LEMUEL'S MOTHER … loved her son in terms of character, wrote the inspired words of Proverbs 31, exalted the fear of God, and gave practical advice to guide all mothers.

VIRTUOUS MOTHER … the ideal mother, fully faithful to husband, diligent and creative, family always first, but reached further, kind to hers and others, never relaxed.

EUNICE … was married to an unbeliever, did not violate her marriage by circumcision, perpetuated the faith of her mother Lois, and trained Paul's favorite minister.

OTHER MOTHERS … Eve, Hagar (Gen 16:1-16), Leah, Rachel, Widow of Zarephath (I Kgs 17:8-24), Harlot (I Kgs 3:16-28), Elizabeth, Mary, Canaanite woman (Matt 15:21-28), Salome (Matt 20:20-28; 27:56; Mark 16:1).

TEN RULES FOR MOTHERS

GOD FIRST … she is a holy woman; fears God, loves Christ, hates sin and the world, prays, and lives by the Bible; always an example of piety to children; relationship with God clearly trumps anything else; nothing can move her; no child competes with God for affection or loyalty; spiritual welfare of children most crucial; will change to match the Bible; no loss too great for discipleship; God will bless this mother over all her peers.

HUSBAND SECOND … fulfills God's will for her primary purpose; loves her husband above her children; honors him over them in affection, attention, time, and effort; agrees with husband against them; illustrates submission and reverence to him daily; maintains a romantic marriage they should desire; points to daddy as the chief object of devotion; establishes priorities in relationships to prosper in life; never backbites him when gone.

EXAMPLE … be consistent always to avoid confusion; children learn by copying you, as with walking, talking, eating; illustrate practical wisdom daily; she guards her tongue at all times, teaching gracious speech; she holds the highest standard in all aspects of life; her passion and zeal for Christ and His things are obvious; she never expects children to do what she has not done; she knows her every attitude, word, and action molds children.

DILIGENT … industry is a Christian virtue often missing today; children are born lazy; a neglected husband, family, or home has direct consequences to destroy; a lack of completing projects and growing the estate is also an indirect loss by a terrible example; this requires daily focus on real objectives and real productivity; assign chores early; include them in necessary projects; you should always be up first and last.

KNOWLEDGEABLE … great mothers keep on learning, and not hobbies, and they never quit; their speech is not noise, but precious content; all valuable knowledge starts with the Bible, and all parts of life should be in agreement or rejected with explanation; this includes knowing your children by winning them to reveal their thoughts; know what is going on in the world and affecting sons; know their friends; know their temperaments.

LOVING … a commandment, for it is more than natural instinct; only beloved like Bathsheba to Solomon; full of pity and compassion; the so-called gentler sex should show kindness; provides secure backstop for enemies or failures; befriends them as they get older to comfort and advise rather than control; knows that true love includes correction, rebukes, and chastening; practices Bible charity in its many details.

TEACHING … fathers have the lead role, but mothers have their role also; they lay down laws for life, since example only goes so far; from early days they promote worship like Hannah; from early days they teach love of others; you must have wisdom, God's wisdom, in your mouth to convey; the much time mothers are with children should be used; they listen to every sermon, review, and store; they read God's word and know it.

STRICT … enforces God's will and parental rules by God's means of rod and reproof; requires children to fully obey and honor her office; never undermines husband in rules or punishment, though may exceed; it was assumed a mother would participate in stoning a rebellious son; they push married children away to promote leave and cleave; they do not allow sentimental compromise with rebel children; requires helpful chores.

ADVISOR … academics, sports, jobs, and money are minimized – character, conduct, spirit, and reputation are maximized; see King Lemuel's mother; not prudish or prissy about warning of sexual or other dangers for teenagers; not embarrassed or fearful of teaching intimate, personal things; can rule out emotion to objectively help children with relationships; remains neutral when feelings run wild; grasps Bible principles of wisdom.

SPIRITUAL … walks in the Spirit and is filled with the Holy Ghost; her speech is laced with the glory of God and beauty of Christ; the kingdom and church come before anything in this world; a heavenly country is more important than a home in the country; promotes and pushes children to a personal relationship with God; the big black book is always consulted and honored; prays with and for her children by name.

Conclusion:

A. Saved mothers will hate every feeling, habit, and priority contrary to the Bible, no matter the source.
B. Though not the main point here, grandmothers surely have a role, for God inspired mention of Lois.
C. Jehovah requires far more than obedience to mothers for 18 years; He requires their perpetual honor.
D. Though not the point here, all mothers should be honored, included those old and failing (Pr 23:22).
E. Father, we thank thee for giving us mothers, for every good deed, for saving from every evil deed.
F. Lord, give every woman the conviction, courage, wisdom, and strength to be the mother you intend.

For Further Study:

A. Sermon Outline: Mothers Like Hannah.
B. Sermon Outline: Family Planning.
C. Sermon Outline: Role of the Woman.
D. Proverbs 4:3, Bathsheba as Mother.
E. Proverbs 31:1, King Lemuel's Mother.
F. Proverbs 31:2, King Lemuel's Mother.
G. Proverbs 1:8, A Mother's Law.

H. Proverbs 6:20, A Mother's Law.
I. Sermon Outline: Child Training.
J. Sermon Outline: Goals of Child Training.
K. Sermon Outline: When Your Husband's a Fool.