

¹The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him.²What, my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows?³Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings.⁴It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink:⁵Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.⁶Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts.⁷Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.⁸Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction.⁹Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.¹⁰Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.¹¹The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.¹²She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.¹³She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.¹⁴She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar.¹⁵She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.¹⁶She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.¹⁷She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.¹⁸She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night.¹⁹She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the

distaff.²⁰ She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.²¹ She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet.²² She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple.²³ Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.²⁴ She maketh fine linen, and selleth it ; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.²⁵ Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.²⁶ She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.²⁷ She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.²⁸ Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also , and he praiseth her.²⁹ Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.³⁰ Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.³¹ Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.