

Dr. Knut Heim, Proverbs, Session 19, Teaching of King Lemuel's Mother (Prov 31:1-9) Podcast – Audio Overview

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Hey everyone, and welcome back. Today we're going deep on some really cool advice for being a better leader. Oh, yeah, definitely some timeless wisdom here, and it comes from you're not going to believe this- those Proverbs. No way, probably, seriously.

I know right, but wait, okay, it gets better It's Proverbs 31 point one through nine. Okay, and get this: it's a queen mother giving advice to her son. Hold on, a queen giving advice to a king. Yep, King Lemuel- that's his name, King Lemuel.

Okay, I've never heard of him. Most people haven't; he's not one of the Israelite Kings, huh? So, like a foreign king, most likely, which makes it even more interesting that his stories are in the Bible. Yeah, yeah, I mean, why include teachings from a foreign King? Well, it tells us a couple of things. First, even way back then, people valued things like justice and compassion and good leadership. Yeah, those are pretty universal.

Exactly. It goes beyond just one culture or religion, and second, it gives us a glimpse into how ancient kingdoms interacted, like some ancient diplomacy. Exactly. They shared wisdom and ideas across borders.

That's pretty cool. But okay, back to this Queen Mother. Oh, yeah. She's a fascinating figure. It's not every day you see a woman taking center stage in a religious text, especially back then, and her words aren't just presented as good advice. Oh, they're called an inspired utterance.

Oh, okay, so like divinely inspired- exactly. It's like the words of prophets. Wow, that says a lot about how much weight her words carried. So what's she telling her son? What's the main message here? Well, she starts with some pretty strong warnings, like, well, the text keeps saying Listen, my son over and over, okay, and she uses the word no three times in a row. Whoa, someone's in trouble.

It definitely gives that sense of urgency. Like she's really worried about his behavior. So what's she warning him about? Spill the tea: two major things? Excessive drinking and having too many women. Oh, juicy. She even calls those women destroyers of Kings.

Whoa, that's intense. Sounds like she's concerned about more than just his personal life, right? Right. This isn't just a mom nagging her son. Yeah, she's a queen advising a king.

So it's political too. Absolutely. She's worried about his ability to lead and the well-being of the kingdom. Okay, that makes sense. Indulging in too much fun can definitely lead to bad decisions, especially if you're a king. Yeah, for sure, but there's one part that throws me off.

Okay, she tells him to give strong drink to people who are suffering. Yeah, that one always gets people doesn't seem very helpful. Well, that's where her wit comes in. She's using sarcasm.

Oh, it's like a rhetorical device to make a point. So she's not actually saying to give alcohol to the poor, not at all. It's more like if you're going to overindulge at least do it for a good cause gotcha. It's like a way of highlighting how absurd his actions are exactly and it ties into a major theme in Proverbs. What's that? The duty of good people to act justly and protect the weak? So it's not just about personal behavior, but about leadership and social justice. You got it. She's telling him to use his power for good. Wow, that's a powerful message, and she doesn't stop there, right? She gives him some positive advice too. Yeah, she definitely lays it out for him. She tells Lemuel that he needs to speak up for those who can't speak for themselves: the poor and needy, all those who are struggling. Wow. So she's saying Be a good king and fight for justice exactly, and it's interesting how she uses this term: the righteous.

Yeah, and in Proverbs, the righteous means people who live by God's laws. They put justice and compassion first. Okay, so it's not enough to just be a good person. You have to actually work to make society more just and fair. Exactly.

It's about taking action. I love how she lays it all out for him: Lemuel, listen up. Don't just sit on your throne and enjoy being King; use your power to help those who need it most. And that message is just as relevant today as it was back then. You know how many people in our world are still struggling and need someone to fight for them? It's true. We can get so caught up in our own lives that we forget about the injustice happening all around us. Absolutely, yeah, but this passage reminds us that we all have a responsibility to speak out against injustice, no matter who we are or what our position is.

It's a powerful reminder for sure. So we've talked about this mysterious King Lemuel, the incredible wisdom of his mother, her warnings about power, and her call to action for the vulnerable. Anything surprise you about this passage? What stood out to you the most? I think for me it's her use of sarcasm and humor. Oh, yeah, not what you'd expect from an ancient text, right? It's unexpected and kind of subversive. Especially coming from a woman in a position of power back then. It shows how intelligent she is and that she's not afraid to challenge her son in a way that he'll actually listen to it makes her feel more relatable to you know. Like she's a real person with the sense of humor and her warnings about the dangers of power are just as true today. They apply to leaders in politics business entertainment you name it we see it all the time. It's like human nature never really changes. We need these reminders to stay grounded to use our influence wisely and to remember those who are less fortunate than us. For sure. So how do we apply this ancient wisdom to our own lives today? We're not kings and queens, but we still have influence in our own circles.

Yeah, what can we do? The key takeaway is to use your voice. Speak up for what you believe in, fight for those who are marginalized or silenced. Use whatever influence you have to make a positive impact. Powerful advice, but she focuses on Lemuel's duty to speak out. What about those of us who don't have a platform or a lot of authority? How can we make a difference? That's a great question. Speaking out isn't always about making grand pronouncements or giving big speeches. Sometimes it's about the everyday moments of

courage, compassion, and advocacy. Oh, I see. So recognizing those small opportunities to make a difference- exactly. It could be as simple as challenging a prejudiced comment, standing up for someone being bullied, or volunteering for a cause you believe in. It's about making a conscious choice to act instead of staying silent.

Yes, and sometimes the most powerful way to speak out is through our actions, through the way we live our lives. So it's about walking the walk, not just talking the talk, leading by example. Exactly, the Queen Mother is telling us that justice is more than just an idea. It's a way of life. It's about making ethical choices, treating others with kindness and respect, and using what we have to create a more just world. So, like, weaving justice into our everyday lives, not just saving it for some big event, exactly. Yeah, and you know what, it makes you think about something else. The Queen's advice isn't just about doing the right thing. It's about something more; it's about who you are as a person. It's about having those virtues like compassion, justice, and humility. So it's not enough to just do good deeds. You've got to have the right heart behind it, right? You can't force people to be just, yeah; it has to come from within. That makes me think about the Queen Mother herself. She's not just giving Lemuel a lecture.

She's living it out. Oh, yeah, she's walking the walk. She's speaking truth to power. She's sticking up for the vulnerable. She's a powerful example of what it means to live a life of purpose, and it reminds us that anyone can be a role model. We can inspire others through what we do and what we say. We might not all be kings and queens, but we can all try to live by those same virtues.

This has been amazing. I feel like I've gained a whole new perspective on this passage from Proverbs, and I'm leaving with a renewed sense of purpose. That's the power of ancient wisdom. It speaks to us across time and cultures. It gives us timeless insights that we can still use today, so to everyone listening out there, take the Queen Mother's words to heart. Don't underestimate the power of your voice, your actions, your choices. You can make a difference. You can be a force for good in the world, and remember, even the smallest act of kindness or courage can make a ripple effect. It can create waves of change that go far beyond ourselves. Thank you for joining us on this deep dive. Until next time, keep seeking knowledge.

Keep asking questions and keep making a difference.