

## ***Proverbs 31:23 – The Crown of Her Husband, Part 1***

“Her husband is known in the gates when he sits among the elders of the land.”

~Proverbs 31:23

Much like our previous study on [Proverbs 31:22](#), this verse seems a bit out of place doesn't it? In our last lesson, we had to stop and consider why this wonderful and biblically submissive woman, that is so priceless and precious in the sight of the LORD God Almighty, would provide bed coverings only for *herself*.

But after we began to meditate on God's Word and turned up our Holy Spirit "hearing aids", we could hear Him gently explain to us how it is that a woman of such noble character is covered: first by the blood of Jesus, the Son of God; second, by the seal of the Holy Spirit until the day of Redemption; and third, by her earthly husband, to protect her from worldly and heretical teachings that our enemy, the devil uses to time and time again to woo her away from the Lord she loves (1 Tim 2:13, 2 Tim 3:1-7).

Unlike our last lesson, this one appears to carry even farther away from what we've been studying up to this point because it only speaks on her husband's character, not hers. How is it that an acrostic poem about an excellent *woman* includes an accolade regarding a *man*?

To be seated at the city gates among the elders of the land was a high honor for men during the time this passage was written. It denoted that such a man was of noble character, full of grace, dealt wisely in business transactions and was often requested to be a witness for others.

A husband is only able to receive such high praise and a seat of great honor, if he has a biblically submissive wife whom he can trust with his heart and home. Having a wife like this, allows a husband to concentrate on all that God has called him to, rather than being carried away by troubles from home.

A woman like this is surely an extravagant and radiant crown on her husband's head (Prov 12:4a). She is his signet ring (i.e., is entrusted with authority) and his most preferred and priceless companion, confidant and friend (Gen 41:42). She is a healthy and strong rib that protects and nourishes her husband's vigor and his environment. She is truly...more precious than jewels.

Though my aspiration is to be the Proverbs 31, biblically submissive woman now, it hasn't always been that way. Raised in the early 70s, just off the cuff of the feminist movement, I was determined to be my own woman, support and provide for myself, and if I married, my husband would merely be an additional trinket to my list of accomplishments.

During the first years of our marriage, I was a very strong-willed, opinionated, Pharisaical, loud and boisterous woman who demanded to be heard, respected, romanced and highly esteemed! Okay, I know you want to laugh, and you can. Believe me, I do. When I remember how ungodly I behaved, yet expected to be well-loved and cherished, it really makes me laugh. I was basically questioning why my husband couldn't and wouldn't snuggle up to a thorn bush! This only confirms that when someone is not walking with God and disobedient to His commands, they are completely illogical and out of their minds. I can say this with assurance because, as you can see, I've been there.

Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered.

~ [Proverbs 28:26](#)

I've said this before and I will say it again; we will never know and appreciate how sweet, sweet is, unless we've tasted sour.

With this in mind, I'm going to do something a bit different with you today. I'm going to give you a little break from thinking you're a horrible mess, by allowing you to see what a horrible mess really looks like.

You've been working so hard up to this point; bearing your soul naked before God, confessing your sins and repenting to God, your husband, children (if necessary) and your discipler or accountability/study group so that you can be healed of the sickness that lures all women: the desire to be our own woman and rule over our husbands.

I think the most appropriate and beneficial thing I can teach you today is what a contentious, falsely pious and unsubmitive wife really looks like. Not just on the outside, because she may look quite "holy" on the outside. But I want to give you a glimpse of the heart of the most contentious, unruly, merciless woman I have ever personally known.

This woman was once truly, the epitome of a modern day Eve. YIKES!

I have her permission to share a personal journal entry in what she has affectionately called her "complaint journal". No, not a prayer journal; a complaint journal. She was such an embittered, self-righteous woman, that at some point, knew it, and thereby had a complaint journal in which she journaled all her complaints to God her Father.

She's gladly allowing you to view the deep recesses of her heart in the hopes that you will be so utterly repulsed by it, you will not venture that way yourselves, but will rather run to our Savior with every breath you have at even the slightest inkling of becoming what she once was.

Before I share the journal entry she wrote, she wants to make sure that you understand where her heart was and what she was thinking at the time she wrote this. You see, she'd been praying for years for God to change her husband. She wanted God to make her husband into a man who was worthy of her. But after four years of praying and receiving no answer from God, she changed her prayer for the next two years. She felt he was "dead weight" and was holding her back spiritually.

Finally, after two years of praying a "new" way and still not getting any response from God, she wrote the following entry in her complaint journal. She wanted God to change her husband or cause him to sin so she could divorce him, and she wanted it to happen now! By this time, they had two sons and she did not want them to grow up, learning to be such ungodly men as she believed her husband to be.

Before you read this, I want to point something out to you. In the second paragraph, she writes, "*I know I can't change anyone, but You can.*" She's referring to God changing her husband. As you read,

you'll see how quickly God transformed her heart and renewed her mind with His Word, just a between punctuation.

*November 22, 1998*

*It is 8:10 a.m. and I am as sad and lost as can be. You'd think I was dragged through a long day, but I haven't. I just feel like I have although it is early in the morning.*

*Lord, where do I go from here? I know I can't change anyone, but I know **You** can. So change **me** Father. Guide me to be less sinful, and more like Christ. Help me to "pursue righteousness and love" so that I may find "life, prosperity and honor." ([Proverbs 21:21](#))*

*Lord, I have so many wants and expectations. Why? Why do I? Could You, Father, create in me a new heart that works hard and expects nothing, so I may turn from anger and hostility against those who I think give little? Lord if You create in me a new heart and mind that is completely focused on You and not myself, I know I will have fewer disappointments in my life here.*

*Guide me O Father, regardless of circumstances, to always be a good witness and example of Your love, power, grace, wisdom and righteousness. May I spend the rest of today, and every day (one day at a time) focused on my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.*

*I know, **You** know sweet, loving Father, that through Your Son, You fully understand what it is to love and give so much with no or little return of it back. I know Jesus has walked more than a mile in my shoes. He did nothing wrong and EVERYTHING righteous and Godly, yet He was beaten, mocked and crucified, so that my life...my eternal life could see Your Glory.*

*Oh Father forgive me for my selfishness and complaining. Release me O Lord of my natural want to complain and grumble of all that I do not have, and place in me a supernatural want to serve, love, persevere and to be humble in all and every situation. I love You Lord with all my heart, all my soul and all my mind. Use me today Father for Your glory.*

*Praise be to the One and Only God through my Christ, Lord and Savior. AMEN"*

Wow! Is our God awesome or what?! Who would ever believe that such a hardened and falsely pious woman could ever be cleansed and made whole again? Only in and through Christ's love was this possible.

Who was this woman?

It was me.

"If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. But truly God has listened; He has attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, because He has not rejected my prayer or removed His steadfast love from me!"

~Psalm 66:18-20

Why did God change my heart in an instant, after six excruciating years and living rebelliously out of His good and perfect will? This happened because of what He promised; He does not reject a repentant soul. I was finally broken and came humbly...perhaps still a bit flustered and angry, but still humbly (Eph 4:26) before His throne of grace, seeking His will, and not mine.

Although my thinking was still in error, God saw my heart; contrite and willing to receive whatever it was that He desired to give me. That day, the Lord of Hosts rebuked me and disciplined me, just as I needed.

“O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare Your praise. For You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; You will not be pleased with a burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise...Let a righteous man strike me—it is a kindness; let him rebuke me—it is oil for my head; let my head not refuse it.”

~Psalm 51:15-17, 141:5a

When I could no longer stand, due to enormous shame, God held out His hand and lifted me out of my miry pit and set my feet upon the Rock ([Psalm 40:2](#)) of His Word. He comforted me and reminded me that there is now therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus ([Romans 8:1-2](#)).

Instead of guilt from my past sins, God lifted me with hope, and the truth that we are all unworthy wretches, deserving eternal damnation in Hell, but Christ came. Jesus Christ took the shame and punishment of my sins and He nailed them to the Cross, purchasing me with His own blood to make me holy, blameless and acceptable before the sight of the Father.

Our glorious God abounds with compassion, and does not deal with us according to our iniquities, but mercifully grants us the everlasting life in His eternal Kingdom! This is why we praise Him!

"The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always chide, nor will He keep His anger forever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His steadfast love toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does He remove our transgressions from us. As a father shows compassion to His children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear Him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust."

~ [Psalm 103:8-14](#)

This is why I can share this for all the world to see. Do I like who I was? No. Do I have guilt and shame over it? No. Why? Because I believe my Father God's word that says He has forgiven me and will refine me through and through, conforming me into the likeness of His brilliant Son, Jesus Christ the Lord. Do I have regret over this? Yes! This is why I and others who are committed to our Savior, sin less. Christians are not sinless, but because we're indwelt with the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us through and through, causes us to sin less...and less, and less, until the Day of Redemption ([1 John 3:6-9](#), [1 John 5:18-20](#)).

If sin has not increasingly lessened in your Christianity, I urge you to examine yourself as God commands (1 Cor 13:5, Rom 8:10, 1 Jn 3:9, 5:18). The booklet "Examine Yourself" by John MacArthur is a great resource and can provide you with Scriptures to help you test yourself with God's Word, rather than with your own opinions or that of others, for only God knows who truly belong to Him (2 Tim 2:19). We can fool ourselves. We can fool others. But we can never fool God.

So what happened after *that* day? God not only opened my heart, but He opened my eyes as well, and I saw my husband like I'd never seen him before. He was the man I'd been praying for! I wasted so many years looking in the mirror I couldn't see anyone else but me.

Many of the imperfections I thought I was seeing in my husband, turned out to be imperfections in me.

God is compassionate, merciful and gracious, even to the wicked and ungrateful (Lk 6:35-36). I know...I've been and sometimes still am, the wicked and ungrateful. Yet our faithful Father God restores me, every time I seek Him with a humble and repentant heart (Matt 3:8, 2 Tim 2:13).

To get a glimpse of what Christ has done for us, envision this picture in your mind: it's a cold wintry day; you're standing at a broken, yet sturdily framed gate; you're surrounded by fresh white snow that blankets the ground. As the sun rises, your soul welcomes it with a smile. You're drawn in by the sun's brilliance and warmth and can't help but turn your face toward the heavens. ..and so you do.

(here or in the beginning of the chapter, I'd like a pencil drawing illustration of what's described below)

Observe:

- The Gate;
- Pure, white snow;
- Facing the sun

Jesus Christ is The Gate whose frame (His divine nature) is strong, yet allowed His physical body to be broken for you and me. No one can enter into the holy presence of God Almighty except through Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God. And as we come to Jesus, filthy, unworthy, yet repentant, He washes our sins, with His precious blood—as white as snow. And now, we can face the Son and drink from the Living Water, so that we may never thirst again. Hallelujah!

All glory and honor be to the Lamb who was slain! May He receive His full reward!

I pray that you learn from my sins, and run far from it. I know for certain our God is a mighty God. He is awesome and there is no sin you or I, can or have ever committed, that is too great for Him to forgive and cleanse us from. God took me from being a woman who was a snare to my husband, to a woman he now wears proudly as his crown, his jewel, his greatest earthly treasure; all because our King Jesus is refining me, so that I am free to display His glory!

I'd like to close this lesson with the chorus from the Casting Crowns' song entitled: *In Me*.

“ ‘Cause when I'm weak, You make me strong  
When I'm blind, You shine Your light on me  
'Cause I'll never get by living on my own ability  
How refreshing to now You don't need me  
How amazing to find that You want me  
So I'll stand on Your truth, and I'll fight with Your strength  
Until You bring the victory, by the power of Christ in me.”

### **Biblical Perspective, Practically Applied:**

1. Memorize, study and meditate on Proverbs 31:23. Research and read sermons and articles by soundly biblical men like: John MacArthur, Alistair Begg, Steve J. Lawson and Voddie Baucham regarding the Proverbs 31 woman and what biblical womanhood practically looks like in today's world.
2. With pad and pen handy, submissively, respectfully and lovingly ask your husband to suggest three practical ways you can help him with kids, house, work, etc., so he can be freed from those burdens and focus on Christ and have an undivided heart to seek God's pleasure first and foremost.
3. Regardless of your husband's response, choose to rejoice in God's faithfulness, love and grace. Humbly receive whatever your husband suggests, even if he doesn't trust you yet, so he only compliments you and suggests nothing. If this happens seek the wise counsel of an older, wiser and biblical woman who will speak truth, and not flattery into our heart and mind (Prov 27:6).