

# CHILDREN OF DESTINY

By L. A. Mott, Jr.

I cannot identify the king called Lemuel in Proverbs 31:1. But his mother's counsel preserved in the first nine verses of Proverbs 31 contains valuable wisdom not only for a king, but, it strikes me, also for anyone who has important business in this world. The passage will be inspirational for any Christian who understands his position in the world.

What advice did this mother give her son? First, "give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings" (v. 3). Not a few kings and others in important positions have been destroyed by a lack of discipline---going after women and other lusts.

She continues: "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes to say, Where is strong drink?" (v. 4). And why not? Because kings and princes have important business to attend to---the administration of justice, the protection of the afflicted (v. 5). Wine and strong drink may cause a ruler to "forget the law" and pervert justice. Drink robs one of his powers, and one who has such important business must have his full senses and all his powers about him.

Drink is not for kings. "Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto the bitter in soul: Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more" (vv. 6-7).

When you first read these lines you may think drink is recommended for certain persons. But do not miss the point. Drink, says Lemuel's mother is for one about to perish, one who has nothing to live for, one in poverty and misery who simply wants to forget all his trouble. But it is not for you, O Lemuel. It is not for a king. You must open your mouth for those who cannot speak for themselves (v. 8). You must "judge righteously, and minister justice to the poor and needy" (v. 9).

You must not forget who you are. You are a king---not a beggar, not some hopeless wretch, but a king! Your life is important---and you must not throw all your powers away as if your life meant nothing.

I am not sure whether the passage about the "worthy woman" continues the advice from Lemuel's mother. Perhaps it does, and she would be pointing out the difficulty and yet the vital necessity of such a man finding "a worthy woman" who can be a help and not a hindrance to a man in fulfilling his destiny.

The ground of the lifestyle called for in this passage is not that one must not violate the rules, but that a person with a high calling must not let his destiny be frustrated

with foolish and worthless activities or habits. But is not such an appeal just as appropriate to any Christian as to a king?

We are the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matt. 5:13-16). We are God's elect with a mission to the world (1 Pet. 2:9). We are called to be "children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life" (Phil. 2:14-16).

We are challenged to walk worthily of our calling (Eph. 4:1), worthily of the gospel (Phil. 1:27), worthily of the Lord (Col. 1:10), worthily of God (1 Thess. 2:12).

What a challenge for young Christians! No doubt most of the young people are going after drink if not also drugs. No doubt purity is in short supply in this promiscuous age. But young friend, you are not one of these hopeless ones, whose lives mean nothing, who have nothing to live for. You are a child of the king. You have a mission in this world. You are a person of destiny. And you must not throw it all away. You must not permit your mission and destiny to be frustrated by foolishness. That may be for one "ready to perish." That may be appropriate for the hopeless. But not for you. Not for a child of destiny like you.