

# Proverbs 31:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings.

## Analysis

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Lemuel's mother warns: 'Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings.' The Hebrew 'chayil' (strength/substance) and 'derek' (ways/paths) refer to energy and life direction. Sexual immorality has destroyed many rulers—think of David, Solomon, and countless others. Reformed theology recognizes sexual sin's particular destructiveness to leaders. Those in authority face unique temptations and their falls have greater consequences. This counsel warns future kings against allowing sexual indulgence to undermine their calling.

## Historical Context

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Solomon, despite his wisdom, was destroyed by his many wives and concubines who turned his heart from God (1 Kings 11:1-4). His father David's adultery with Bathsheba brought lasting consequences (2 Samuel 12:10-14).

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. Are you guarding against sexual temptation, especially if you hold positions of leadership?
2. How have you seen sexual immorality destroy leaders and their effectiveness?
3. What safeguards do you need to protect your integrity and calling?

## Interlinear Text

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אֶל | תֵּת | לְנִשְׁ יָם | חֵילָךְ | וְדַרְכֶיךָ יִגְדֹּל | לְמַח וְתֵלֵךְ  
H408 Give unto women not thy strength nor thy ways to that which destroyeth  
H5414 H802 H2428 H1870 H4229

מְלָכִין:  
kings  
H4428

## Additional Cross-References

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**Nehemiah 13:26** (Kingdom): Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin.

**Deuteronomy 17:17** (Parallel theme): Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.

**1 Kings 11:1** (Kingdom): But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites;