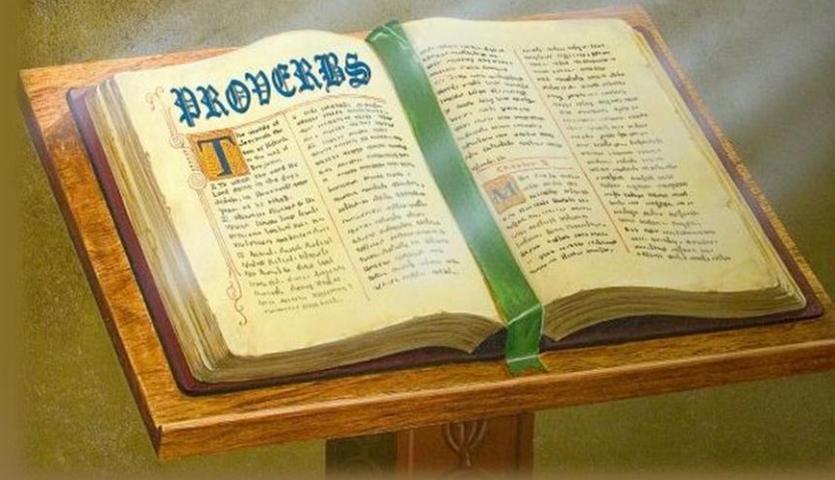


WISE WORDS FOR FAMILIES



The book of Proverbs is rich in advice on relationships.

Let's review Proverbs' advice on family; the relationships between spouses and between parents and children.



Marriage:

- Faithfulness
- Relationships
- Character

Parents:

- Parenthood
- Education

FAITHFULNESS

"For the lips of the adulterous woman drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil; but in the end she is bitter as gall, sharp as a double-edged sword." (Proverbs 5:3-4 NIV)

The godly person reserves (if not married) and preserves (if married) his or her deepest affections and sexual intimacy for marriage.

Proverbs 5 explains the bitter consequences of illicit sexual relationships.



- 👉 We run the risk of losing eternal life (v. 5)
- 👉 The lack of commitment results in an unstable relationship (v. 6)
- 👉 It brings remorse and unhappiness (v. 11-14)

Therefore, Solomon advised us to enjoy sexual intimacy with our spouse (v. 15-17), and always rejoice “with the wife [or husband] of [our] youth.” (v. 18).

RELATIONSHIPS

"Better to live on a corner of the roof than share a house with a quarrelsome wife." (Proverbs 21:9 NIV)



Living on the roof? The book of Proverbs is full of hyperboles like this one (19:24; 27:14) which encourage us to take relationships with a pinch of humor.

A cheerful attitude makes communication more effective. It helps to deal with issues with ease. However, humor should not be used to minimize or avoid serious issues.

Arguments, constant scowls and complaints are symptoms of bad relationships.

Therefore, sincere and kind communication is key to good family relationships.



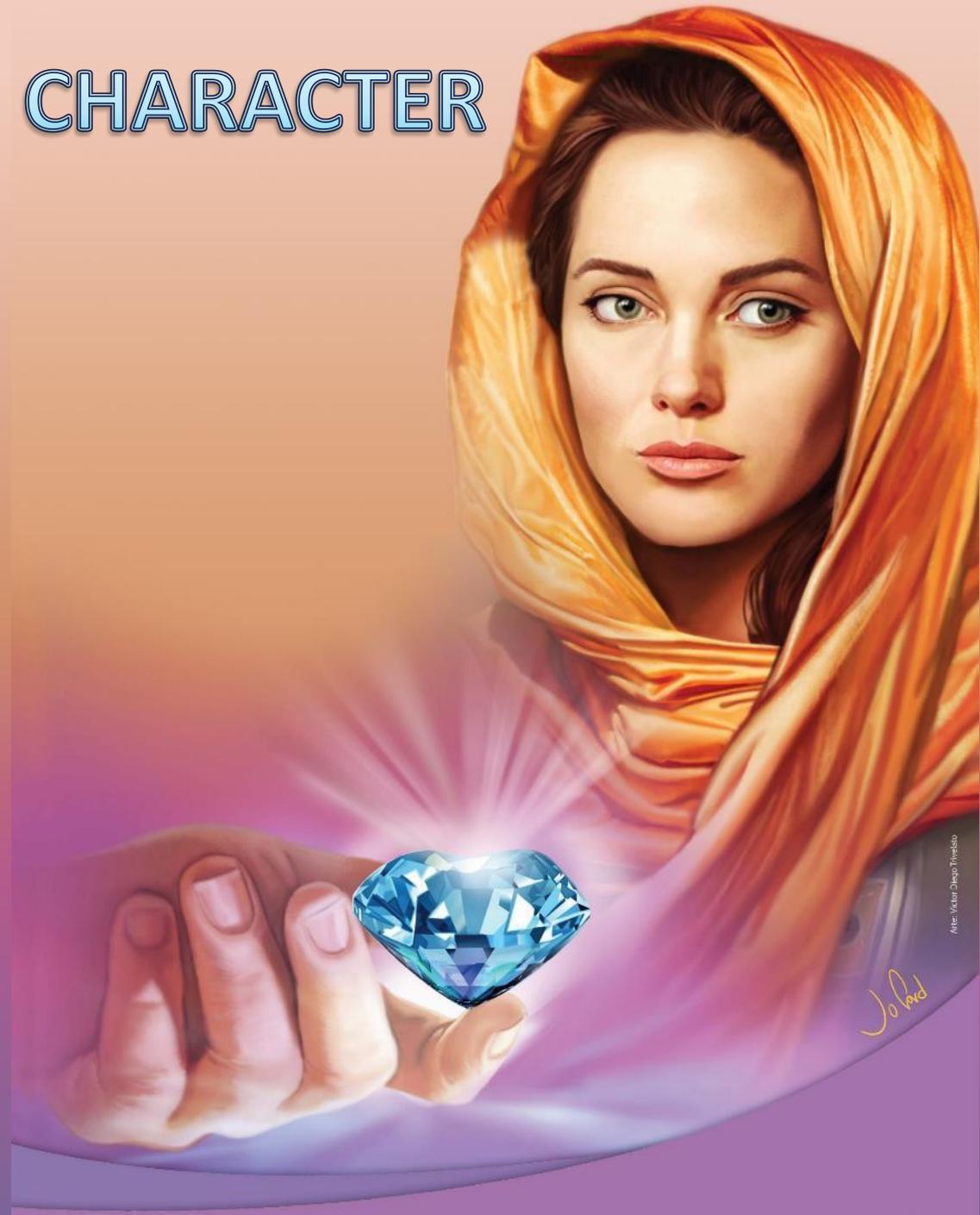
“Neither the husband nor the wife should attempt to exercise over the other an arbitrary control. Do not try to compel each other to yield to your wishes. You cannot do this and retain each other’s love. Be kind, patient, and forbearing, considerate, and courteous. By the grace of God you can succeed in making each other happy, as in your marriage vow you promised to do.”

**"Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies."
(Proverbs 31:10)**

Proverbs 31:10-31 is an acrostic. Each verse of the poem begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. This poem describes the attributes of an ideal spouse.

The number of attributes of the ideal wife (or husband) may feel overwhelming. The main idea is not to fulfill that list, but to do everything the best way we can (Ecclesiastes 9:10; Colossians 3:23).

CHARACTER



**"Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies."
(Proverbs 31:10)**

CHARACTER

We're encouraged to develop the character of that wife:

**Trustworthiness
(v. 11)**

**Kindness
(v. 12)**

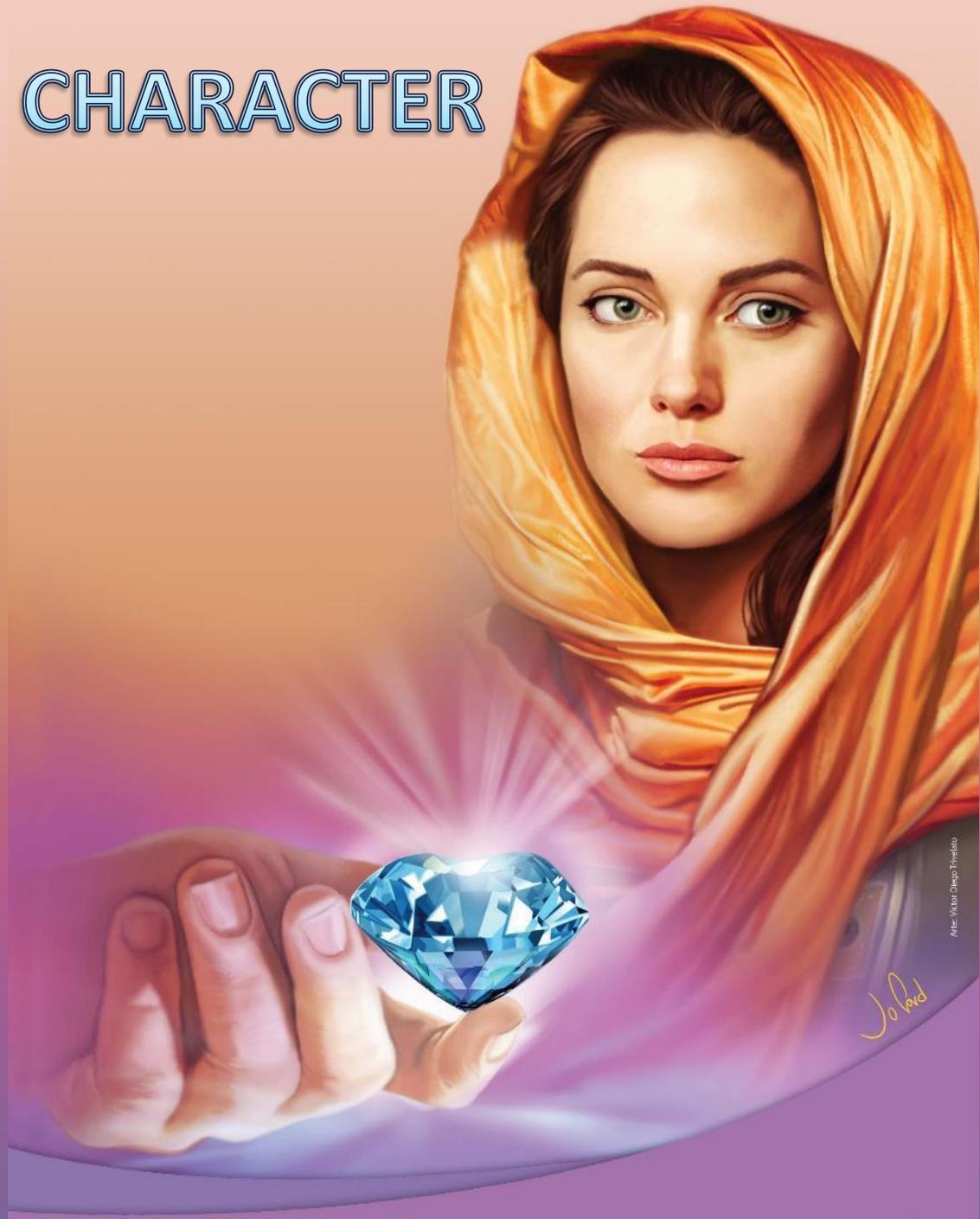
**Industry
(v. 15)**

**Faithfulness
(v. 18)**

**Compassion
(v. 20)**

**Reliability
(v. 25)**

**The key to develop such a character is to fear God
(v. 30).**



PARENTHOOD

"Whoever fears the Lord has a secure fortress, and for their children it will be a refuge." (Proverbs 14:26 NIV)

What does Proverbs teach about how parents should behave?



Family should come before work (15:27)



Be patient and control your feelings (12:16; 15:1)



Discipline your children without any abuse of authority (16:6)



Be faithful and respect your spouse (5:18)



Follow Jesus and be governed by God's Word and love (30:5)

Wise spouses and parents seek God's help to make the right decisions.



CHRIST

EDUCATION

"He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly." (Proverbs 13:24)

A small tree needs bracing, care and protection to grow properly. Likewise, children need to be disciplined since an early age to develop a proper character (Proverbs 19:18).



Constant love and patient teaching are key to a corrective and redeeming discipline, along with a consistent example.

Sin affects both parents and children, so it's important to seek direction and power from God to educate our children and lead them to Christ.



E.G.W. (The Adventist Home, cp. 23, p. 160)

“The sympathy, forbearance, and love required in dealing with children would be a blessing in any household. They would soften and subdue set traits of character in those who need to be more cheerful and restful. The presence of a child in a home sweetens and refines. A child brought up in the fear of the Lord is a blessing.

Care and affection for dependent children removes the roughness from our natures, makes us tender and sympathetic, and has an influence to develop the nobler elements of our character.”