

More Precious Than Rubies

by Wayne Goff

I was privileged to attend the funeral services Friday for Lenora Vaughn, wife, mother, grandmother and Christian for many years. Naturally, Proverbs 31 was read, which described her life as wife and mother. But few can truly appreciate the hardships of a few years ago. I write about it because when I heard about her difficulties it reminded me of what I and others have heard from our grandparents and parents. So young mothers, when you get to feeling a little tired and worn out, just consider the following from a few years ago:

Women had to draw water from a well as far as one hundred feet from the house to provide water for cooking, drinking, and washing. They had to put small pieces of wood in a wood-burning stove in order to heat the kitchen and cook meals. They learned how to make biscuits from flour, by hand, and were industrious enough to take the flour sacks and make dresses for their daughters.

Many made lard and lye soap from the hog which had been butchered for food, and were glad to get the fresh meat, cured meat, etc. Nothing was wasted. When wash time came, washboards were used until a “washing machine” came along which involved more manual labor and a crank to stir the clothes and wring them out. Then they were placed on lines to dry. Nobody had heard of a dryer yet. Electricity was invented but not available to many of these godly mothers who made do with what they had.

A large family garden provided vegetables for the entire year, as the family gathered to pick, snap, and can such produce as peas, beans, squash, corn, and okra. Imagine the hard work of canning in a kitchen without electricity or modern stoves. It took hours of hard work, but when the cupboards and storm shelters were full of canned goods, mothers could rest their minds knowing their families would be well fed. *Nobody had heard of Wal-Mart back then!*

Many of the children born to these mothers were born at home, with a neighboring older lady to help. If a mother was fortunate, a doctor would be available. But there were few hospitals, and little medicine to comfort them at time of birth.

I could go on but you get the picture. Now consider these hardships and read again Proverbs 31:10-31. Godly mothers took their jobs seriously then . . . **and now.** God bless them and increase their tribe!

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