

Proverbial Super-Woman Syndrome
ESM Eshet Chayil Meeting
5/19/2018
Tina Fallstead



10. An accomplished woman who can find her? Far beyond pearls is her value.
11. Her husbands heart relies on her, and he shall lack no fortune.
12. She bestows goodness upon him, never evil, all the days of her life.
13. She seeks wool and flax, and her hands work willingly.
14. She is like a merchant's ships; from afar she brings her substance.
- 15 She arises while it is yet night, and gives food to her household and a portion to her maidens.
16. She envisions a field and buys it; from the fruit of her handiwork she plants a vineyard.
17. With strength she girds her loins, and invigorates her arms.
18. She stretches out her hand to the distaff, and her palms support the spindle.
20. She spreads out her palm to the poor, and extends her hands to the destitute.
21. She fears not snow for her household, for all her household is clothed with scarlet wool.
22. She made for herself luxurious bedspreads; linen and purple wool are her clothing.
23. Her husband is distinctive in the councils, when he sits with the elders of the land.

24. She makes a cloak and sells (it), and delivers a belt to the peddler.
25. Strength and majesty are her raiment, and she joyfully awaits the last day.
26. She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.
27. She anticipates the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of laziness.
28. Her children have risen and praised her; her husband, and he extolled her;
29. Many women have amassed achievement, but you surpassed them all.
30. Grace is false, and beauty vain; a woman who fears HASHEM, she should be praised.
31. Give her the fruits of her hands; and let her be praised in the gates by her very own deeds.

A: High value of a good wife (v. 10)¶

B: Husband benefited by wife (vv. 11-12)¶

C: Wife works hard (vv. 13-19)¶

D: Wife gives to poor (v. 20)¶

E: No fear of snow (v. 21a)¶

F: Children clothed in scarlet (v. 21b)¶

G: Coverings for bed, wife wears linen (v. 22)¶

H: Public respect for her husband (v. 23)¶

G': Sells garments and sashes (v.24)¶

F': Wife clothed in dignity (v. 25a)¶

E': No fear of future (v. 25b)¶

D': Wife speaks wisdom (v. 26)¶

C': Wife works hard (v. 27)¶

B': Husband and children praise wife (vv. 28-29)¶

A': High value of a good wife (vv. 30-31)¶

Duane A Garrett, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, The New American Commentary 14 (Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman Press, 1993), 248.¶

What do we know about Proverbs 31?

1. It is counsel given to King Solomon by his mother
2. Recited on Erev Shabbat by the husband to the wife
3. The hymn contains an acrostic as a further illusion to her all-encompassing virtues (in verses 10-31)
4. Chiasm or At Bash can be found in verses 10-31
5. Passages have been interpreted as a metaphor for:
 - a. The Shechinah (Divine Presence)
 - b. The Sabbath
 - c. The Torah
 - d. The Soul
 - e. The Bride of Messiah
6. Opens with the powerful term that we like to use and aspire to emulate: 'Eshet Chayil'
7. We also know that over the years women have felt inadequate when comparing themselves to this seemingly perfect specimen of womanhood

The word 'chayil' as used in scripture means more than just valor, it includes the possession of whatever attributes are needed to carry out the task at hand.'

While the word 'chayil' is used many times throughout scripture, more than 240 times in fact, the term Eshet Chayil is only used 3 times, in 2 books.

Proverbs 12:4 An accomplished woman (*eshet chayil*) is the crown of her husband, but a shameful one is like rot in his bones.

Proverbs 31:10 An accomplished woman (*eshet chayil*) who can find? Far beyond pearls is her value.

Ruth 3:11 And now my daughter do not fear; whatever you say, I will do for you; for all the men in the gate of my people know that you are a worthy woman (*eshet chayil*).

Ruth 1:16 But Ruth said Do not urge me to leave you, to turn back from going after you. For to wherever you go I will go; where you lodge I will lodge; your people are my people, and your G-d is my G-d; where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus may Hashem do to me and thus may he do more for only death will separate between me and between you.

Numbers 25:1 While Israel was staying in Shittim, the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women, 2 who invited them to the sacrifices to their gods. The people ate the sacrificial meal and bowed down before these gods. 3 So Israel yoked themselves to the Baal of Peor. And the Lord's anger burned against them.

I think that we can say that she was not fearful of the future.

Proverbs 31:21a She fears not snow for her household.

Proverbs 31: 25b She shall joyfully awaits the last day.

Ruth 2:11 Boaz replied and said to her, ‘All that you have done for your mother-in-law since your husband’s death has been fully reported to me-how you left your father and mother and the land of your birth, and came to a people you did not know before.’

See how this mirrors **Proverbs 31:31** Give her the fruit of her hands; and let her be praised in the gates by her very own deeds.’

Her deeds spoke for themselves.

Proverbs 20:11 states that ‘Even a youth can be recognized by his deeds, whether his acts are pure or just.

Being an Eshet Chayil or Woman of Valor doesn’t mean that you have done everything perfectly and never made a poor decision in your entire lifetime. It does mean that we do the best we can to emulate the character qualities of our Messiah.

Are we loving?

Are we diligent?

Are we kind?

Are we generous?

Are we wise?

Do we fear the LORD?



Ruth is a beautiful example to us that no matter who you are or where you come from, the Father will accept you if you come to him. He will place His name upon you and give you hope and a future.

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Just look at the blessing that he fulfilled in Ruth:

Ruth 4:11 Then declared the House of Israel. May you prosper in Ephrath and may your name be famous in Bethlehem. And may your house be like the house of Perez whom Tamar bore to Judah, through the offspring which Hashem will you from this young woman.

