

אשה Who can find a wife of excellence? Her value far exceeds that of gems. The heart of her husband trusts in her, he lacks no gain. She treats him with goodness, never with evil, all the days of her life. She seeks out wool and flax, and works willingly with her hands. She is like the merchant ships; she brings her food from afar. She rises while it is still night, gives food to her household, and sets out the tasks for her maids. She considers a field and buys it; from her earnings she plants a vineyard. She girds her loins with strength, and flexes her arms. She realizes that her enterprise is profitable; her lamp does not go out at night. She puts her hands on the spindle, and her palms grasp the distaff. She holds out her hand to the poor, and extends her hands to the destitute. She does not fear for her household in the frost, for her entire household is clothed [warmly] in scarlet. She makes her own tapestries; her garments are of fine linen and purple. Her husband is well-known at the gates, as he sits with the elders of the land. She makes linens and sells [them]; she provides the merchants with girdles. Strength and dignity are her garb, she looks smilingly toward the future. She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the

teaching of kindness is on her tongue. She watches the conduct of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children rise and acclaim her, her husband—and he praises her: Many daughters have done worthily, but you surpass them all. Charm is deceptive and beauty is naught; a God-fearing woman is the one to be praised. Give her praise for her accomplishments, and let her deeds laud her at the gates.¹

אִשָּׁה חֵיל מִי יִמְצָא, וְרַחֵק מִפְּנִינִים מְכָרָה: בְּטַח
 בָּהּ לֵב בַּעֲלָהּ, וְשָׁלָל לֹא יִחְסֵר: גִּמְלָתָהּ
 טוֹב וְלֹא רָע, כֹּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיהָ: דְּרָשָׁה צֹמֵר וּפְשָׁתִים,
 וַתַּעַשׂ בַּחֲפִץ כַּפֶּיהָ: הֵיטָה כְּאֵגִיזוֹת סוֹחֵר, מִמְּרַחֵק
 תָּבִיא לַחֲמָה: וַתִּקֶּם בְּעוֹד לַיְלָה, וַתִּתֵּן טָרַף לְבֵיתָהּ,
 וְחֵק לְנַעֲרֹתֶיהָ: זָמְמָה שָׂדֶה וַתִּקְחָהּ, מִפְּרֵי כַפֶּיהָ
 נִטְעָה כָּרֶם: חֲגָרָה בְּעוֹז מְתַנֶּיָּה, וַתֵּאֱמֹן זְרוּעֹתֶיהָ:
 טַעֲמָה כִּי טוֹב סַחָרָה, לֹא יִכָּבֵה בַלְיָלָה נְרָה: יָדֶיהָ
 שְׁלָחָה בַּבַּיִשׁוֹר, וְכַפֶּיהָ תִּמְכּוּ פָלֶדֶ: כַּפָּה פְּרִישָׁה
 לְעֵנִי, וַיָּדֶיהָ שְׁלָחָה לְאֲבִיוֹן: לֹא תִירָא לְבֵיתָהּ
 מִשֶּׁלֶג, כִּי כָל בֵּיתָהּ לְבָשׁ שָׁנִים: מִרְבָּדִים עֲשֵׂתָהּ
 לָהּ, שֵׁשׁ וְאַרְגָּמָן לְבוּשָׁה: נוֹדַע בְּשָׁעָרִים בַּעֲלָהּ,
 בְּשִׁבְתּוֹ עִם זִקְנֵי אֶרֶץ: סָדִין עֲשֵׂתָהּ וַתִּמְכֹּר, וַחֲגוּר
 נִתְּנָה לְכַנְעֵנִי: עוֹז וְהִדְר לְבוּשָׁה, וַתִּשְׁחַק לְיוֹם
 אַחֲרוֹן: פִּיהָ פָתְחָה בְּחִכְמָה, וַתּוֹרֵת חֶסֶד עַל

1. Psalms 91:11. 2. Ibid. 121:8.

לְשׁוֹנָה: צוֹפְיָה הַלִּיכוֹת בֵּיתָהּ, וְלֶחֶם עֲצָלוֹת לֹא
 תֹאכַל: קָמוּ בָנֶיהָ וַיֵּאֱשְׁרוּהָ, בַּעֲלָהּ וַיְהַלְלָהּ: רַבּוֹת
 בָּנוֹת עָשׂוּ חֵיל, וְאַתְּ עָלִית עַל כָּלֵנָה: שִׁקְר הַחַן
 וְהַכֵּל הַיָּפִי, אִשָּׁה יִרְאֵת יְיָ הִיא תִתְהַלֵּל: תָּנוּ לָהּ
 מִפְּרֵי יָדֶיהָ, וַיְהַלְלוּהָ בְּשָׁעָרִים מֵעַשְׂיָה: