

**P31 Midrash:** Abraham wrote it about Sarah  
 19 Jewish **Matriarchs** outline the verses  
**Ashkenazi/kabbalistic** 16th century tradition to read on erev Shabbat  
**Reformed** tradition added reading **Ps.112** to the husband  
 A mystical metaphor for the **Shekinah** =  
 (not in the Tanakh, **refers to God when He is present in certain place**)

## I. Proverbs 31:1-9

What Not to wear:  
 Find a woman who'll be your **ezer**.

## II. Ezer Kinegdo Gen. 2:18

Not good that man is alone (lone ranger) - Adam was created complete -  
 left by himself He would be self sufficient, w/o need  
 God separated Adam making him **insufficient** by himself  
 Adam would need Chava to be whole, missing attributes come back together

**Ezer**= help; from

**azar** = surround, protect, aid, help, assist and support in times of hardship  
 and distress (succor)

**YHVH is Israel's ezer** (17 references in Tanach, more than half refer to YHVH as)

**III. Eshet:** Strength, Valor, Capable, Virtuous, Substance, Excellent  
**Chayil:** dance, whirl around

**Jeremiah 31:22** - *"The Lord has created a new thing on the earth; a woman encircles (shelter, surround, border on every side) a man."*

## IV. SUBSTANCE (below the surface)

Proverbs 31:10-12,17, 23, 27

**Substance:** the ultimate reality that underlies all outward manifestations and change; the essential (permanent) or real nature of something; the primary or most significant part or property of

(syn) **property**: the quality or trait peculiar to an individual or thing: Virtue  
(righteousness or conduct pertaining to a moral standard)

**31:10** A wife of substance who can find?

Her value is far beyond that of **pearls** = *pninim* = face

Layers upon layers of the same material that an oyster excretes to deal with an invader or an irritant. **Through & through**  
When found in an oyster the pearl is complete.  
It needs no polish or cutting or refinement

**Matthew 13:45-46:**

“Again, the kingdom of God is like a merchant on the lookout for fine pearls. On finding one very valuable pearl he went away, sold everything he owned and bought it.”

**31:11** The heart of her husband safely trusts in her

**Batach** = takes refuge

\*As ribs protect the heart

\*As Israel was surrounded by YHVH in the desert

\*As Levites guarded the Tabernacle keeping the strangers/  
“adulterers” away from the Holy place

**Trust**: A reliance or a resting of the mind on the integrity, veracity, justice, friendship or other sound principle”

R. Hirsch: **Echad** can only happen if they become one in heart, mind, soul, and mutually submit all of their strength to God.

**31:12** She works to bring him good, not harm, all the days of her life

**31:17-18a** She gathers her strength around her and throws herself into her work. She see that her business affairs go well;...

**Matthew 24:42-51** (look up)

**1 Timothy 5:10** (older widows) Prerequisites:

Faithful to husband, known for good deeds, reared children well, showed hospitality, washed the feet of God's people, helped those in trouble, and engaged in all kinds of good work.

**Tziphorah Heller "Our Bodies Our Souls"**

Most Men develop through emet/truth, from the outside through Torah study and observing the world.

Women develop through emunah/trust and a complete attachment to God from deep within the soul. Women are what men are not.

**Seven Shepherds, Seven Attributes, Seven prophetesses**

Chochma/Male: gathers facts - Binah/Female: deduces facts

Abraham = Lovingkindness	Sarah = Wisdom
Isaac = Justice	Miriam = Edification
Jacob = Beauty/completeness	Devorah = Motivation
Moshe = Humility	Chanah = Prayer
Aaron = Splendor/ Peacemaker	Avigail = Insight (alternative perspective)
Joseph = Foundations	Hulda = Mercy
David = Sovereignty	Esther = Silence (knowing when to speak)

Men want to HAVE (the pearl)

Women want to BE (the pearl)

**31:23** Her husband is known at the city gates when he sits with the leaders of the land

His **reputation** is paramount and she is his testimony.

Quote of the week:

"A woman's sense of self and power should come not from the number of heads she can turn, but rather from the minds and the hearts she can turn." ~Tziporah Heller~