

A reading from the book of PROVERBS

When one finds a worthy wife,

her value is far beyond pearls.

Her husband, entrusting his heart to her,

has an unfailing prize.

She brings him good, and not evil,

all the days of her life.

She obtains wool and flax

and makes cloth with skillful hands.

Like merchant ships,

she secures her provisions from afar.

She rises while it is still night,

and distributes food to her household.

She picks out a field to purchase;

out of her earning she plants a vineyard.

She is girt about with strength,

and sturdy are her arms.

She enjoys the success of her dealings;

at night her lamp is undimmed.

She puts her hands to the distaff,

and her fingers ply the spindle.

She reaches out her hands to the poor,

and extends her arms to the needy.

She fears not the snow for her household;

and her charges are doubly clothed.

She makes her own coverlets;

fine linen and purple are her clothing.

She is clothed with strength and dignity,

and she laughs at the days to come.

She opens her mouth in wisdom,

and on her tongue is kindly counsel.

She watches the conduct of her household,

and she eats not her food in idleness.

Her children rise up and praise her;

her husband, too, extols her:

“Many are the women of proven worth,

but you have excelled them all.”

Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting;

the woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.

Give her a reward of her labors,

and let her works praise her at the city gates.

The Word of the Lord.