

Proverbs 31:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.

Analysis

Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all—The ־ (resh) line contains the husband's direct praise (continuing from v.28). Banot (daughters) here means capable women generally, and asu chayil (have done valiantly) uses the same root as eshet chayil (v.10). He acknowledges that many women demonstrate excellence, but his wife surpasses them all (alith al-kulanah).

This isn't generic flattery but specific recognition of superlative character. The husband's praise completes the acrostic poem's portrait: a woman of strength (v.10), industry (vv.13-19), generosity (v.20), wisdom (v.26), and faithful diligence (v.27). Her excellence isn't comparative rivalry but covenant faithfulness that outshines even other virtuous women. Proverbs celebrates her not to shame others but to inspire emulation of wisdom's ways.

Historical Context

Public praise from a husband in ancient culture carried significant weight, especially in the civic setting of 'the gates' (v.23). His declaration that she surpasses all other capable women elevates her as an exemplar of wisdom's fruit, validating her life's faithful labor before the community.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How do you respond to excellence in others—with jealous comparison or grateful inspiration?
2. What would it mean to pursue superlative faithfulness in your calling, not for competitive glory but covenant love?
3. In what practical ways might you honor those whose character genuinely excels, pointing others to emulate wisdom?

Interlinear Text

עַל יְתָהּ עַל
Many daughters have done virtuously but thou excellest
H7227 H1323 H6213 H2428 H859 H5927 H5921

כָּלָנָה:

H3605

Additional Cross-References

Ephesians 5:27 (Parallel theme): That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.