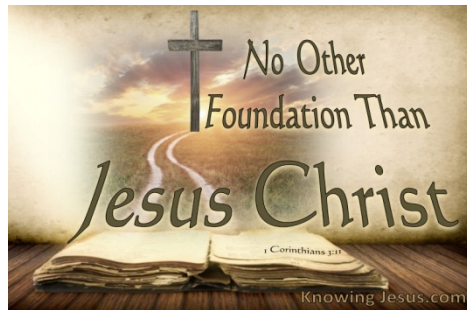


THE FOUNDATIONS OF A VIRTUOUS WOMAN

(She Feareth the Lord)



Helaman 2:74-75 **74** And now my sons, remember, remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation, that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds; yea, his shafts in the whirlwind; **75** Yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you, to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless woe, because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build, they cannot fall.

If we are going to understand the virtuous woman, and attempt to become like her, we must first examine the foundation she has chosen to build her life upon.

Proverbs 31:30 Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.

The virtuous woman of proverbs has not built her life upon physical beauty or upon the things of this world. She knows the things of this world have no lasting value. Instead she has built upon the “Fear of the Lord.”

Proverbs 1:7 Fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

**Fear in this context does not mean terror, but belief and trust in God.
A person who fears God acknowledges God as creator and Lord, and has a deep abiding faith and trust in him. Fear of the Lord signifies a deep respect for God.
A person who fears the Lord glorifies him by the things they do and say, and is obedient to God and submits willingly to their Heavenly Father’s will.
Fear = Faith in God.**

Hebrews 11:7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house.

To enhance our understanding of the definition “Fear of the Lord”
let us break it down into the following segments:

1. Fear of the Lord = Faith

Deuteronomy 5:24, 28-29 And ye said, Behold, the Lord our God hath showed us his glory and his Greatness and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire; we have seen this day that God doth talk with man, and he liveth.....And the Lord heard the voice of your words,...and the Lord said unto me...O that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever.

2. Faith in the Lord = Faith has Two Parts

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must **believe** that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

James 2:17-18 Even so faith, if it have not works is dead, being alone. Therefore wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without **works** is dead and cannot save you?

- A. **Belief** = The virtuous woman believes in God and has complete faith and trust in Him. She knows He is her refuge in every time of trouble, her salvation, and the rock upon which to build her life. By faith Christ dwells in her heart and she is rooted and grounded in love for God and others.

(Also read: Eph. 3:17; Psalm 57:1; Mark 1:24; Heb. 11:6-7; Jer. 29:11; Deut. 33:27; Ruth 2:12; Romans 4:20-21; Numbers 23:19; Ether 5:4-22; D&C 58:1b)

- B. **Action (Works)** = The virtuous woman acts out her faith through obedience and submission to God. She is diligent in keeping the commandments of God. She knows that her love for God is made evident by the keeping of His commandments. The keeping of His commandments is the deepest desire of her heart. She is willing to submit her will, to the divine will of her Heavenly Father. She acknowledges God as the Lord and master of her life, and knows His wisdom and knowledge is supreme.

(Also read: Deut. 6:1-9, 4:30-31, 11:26-28; John 14:15; Job 13:15; Col. 3:1-3; Mark 8:36-40; John 12:24-26; Luke 9:23-24, 22:41-44)

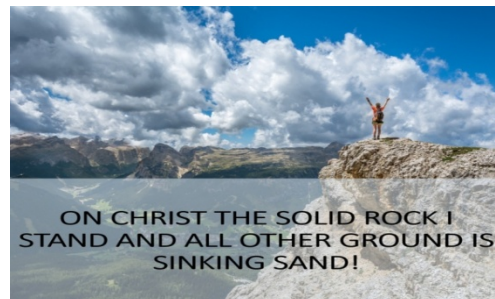
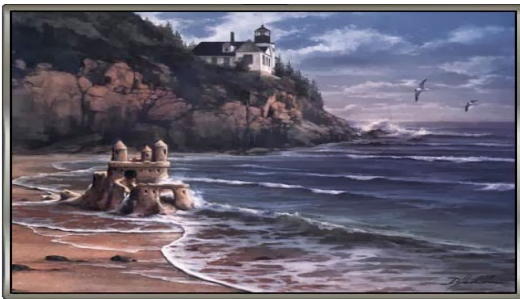
SCRIPTURES ON FEAR OF THE LORD & FOUNDATIONS

- Deut 5:29 Oh that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear Me, and keep all My commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever!
- Deut 6:2 That thou mightest fear the Lord thy God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged.
- Deut 6:4-9 Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord;
And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.
And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart;
And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.
And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.
And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.
- Deut 6:13 Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve Him, and shalt swear by His name.
- Deut 6:17 Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and His testimonies, and His statutes, which He hath commanded thee.
- Eccl 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; Fear God, and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.
- Prov 14:27 The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.
- Prov 1:7 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; but fools despise wisdom and instruction.
- D&C 45:6a And it shall come to pass that he that feareth Me shall be looking forth for the great day of the Lord to come, even for the signs of the coming of the Son of man;
- Rev 11:18 And the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear Thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.
- Mal 3:16-18 Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name.

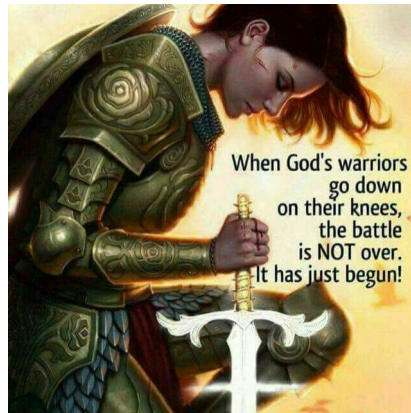
SCRIPTURES ON FEAR OF THE LORD & FOUNDATIONS

- Continued And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not.
- 3 Ne 11:23 But unto you that fear My name, shall the Son of righteousness arise with healing in His wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall.
- Rev 14:6-7 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.
- Prov 10:25 As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more; but the righteous is an everlasting foundation.
- I Cor 3:10-11 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.
- I Timothy 6:18-19 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

Matthew 7:34-35 34 Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock, and the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock. **35** And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand; and the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it.



SHE GIRDETH HER LOINS WITH STRENGTH



Proverbs 31:17 **She girdeth her loins with strength**, and strengtheneth her arms.

The point of “girding up your loins” is readiness for work. But to say she girds herself with strength means that she begins Vigorously. The Hebrew phrase for “she girds her loins” means to prepare oneself for something requiring readiness, strength, or endurance.

Strong’s Concordance = “Strength” = Hebrew root word = 5797 - 5810 = the original Hebrew words for strength are: owz (oze) = A Force, Security, Majesty, Loud Power, Praise-Boldness. Then 5810 takes you to 5812 and on to 3050-3068 to 3070 and a long list of God’s names = Such as: The Lord most Vehement, Jehovah is my banner, Jehovah-Jireh, meaning God will provide, and will see to it, Jehovah-Yariyb meaning God will contend or fight my battles, Johavah-Nicciy meaning God is my banner.

The Virtuous Woman goes forth under God’s banner, even the power and authority of God. She is girded about with His Spirit. It is in His strength she goes forth about her business. The Hebrew sends us back to the names of God to remind us we cannot overcome the trials and temptations and battles of life on our own. We must tap into God’s Power to succeed.

She Strengtheneth Her Arms

Thus girded with strength, she makes firm or steels her arms.

Philippians 4:13 **I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.** The Christian soldier must avoid two evils: She must not faint or yield in life’s battles.

Ephesians 6:10-11 **10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.**
11 Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

The Virtuous Woman prepares herself with loud, powerful and bold praise. She is strong and knows who she is. She is a child of the King and she knows it.

WOMEN OF THE SCRIPTURES



In The Scriptures We Find Many Examples of Virtuous Women

RUTH: In Ruth 3:11, she is told *“thou art a virtuous woman.”* Ruth acknowledged God and expressed her faith in God when she said *“thy people shall be my people and thy God my God.”* Faith has two parts—belief and action. Ruth demonstrated both aspects of faith in her life. First she believed in the God of Israel, and then she acted upon that belief by moving out in faith and going with her mother-in-law into a strange land. Ruth 2:12 *“A full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wing thou art come to trust.”* This scripture clearly shows the trust and faith of Ruth. It was through her faith that Ruth was able to express the great love that she is still known for today. Her loving actions are used as examples today in wedding ceremonies and in wedding music, and she is listed in the Bible as an ancestor of Christ. The very love that she expressed in her life came from her faith in God. Eph. 3:17-19 *“That Christ may dwell in your hearts **by faith**; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend...and know the love of Christ....”*

ESTHER: She influenced a king and saved her people. We can tell Esther was a woman of faith and virtue by her actions. When called upon to save her people she was obedient, even though it could have cost her her life. She moved out in faith and sought the Lord in prayer and fasting. Esther’s faith (Esther 4:14-16) saved the Jewish people.

MARY: Mary, the mother of Jesus, was another virtuous woman. I Nephi 3:55 says she was *“a virgin most beautiful and fair above all other virgins.”* She trusted in God and was willing to act upon her faith. In Luke 1:38, we see her faith in action as she submits to the plan and purpose of God, *“Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word.”*

In The Scriptures We Find Many Examples of Virtuous Women (continued)

DEBORAH: Deborah is one of the most influential women of the bible. She is known for her wisdom and courage. She was a Judge, Prophetess, Warrior, Minstrel and a wife. She had exemplary moral character and the people gave her great love and respect. Like [Moses before](#) and [David afterward](#), she carried the responsibility of prophet, national leader, and military commander. She was called a Mother of Israel. Judges 5:7 *“I Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel.”*

MOTHERS: In the Book of Mormon we find 2,000 virtuous women. They are nameless, known only as the mothers of the 2,000 stripling warriors. These women had built their lives upon the same foundation as the virtuous woman of Proverbs. Their sons show forth the influence of a virtuous mother.
(Read Alma 24:76-77, and Alma 26:56-67)

EMMA SMITH:

Lucy Mack Smith wrote about Emma: “I have never seen a woman in my life who would endure every species of fatigue and hardship from month to month, and from year to year, with the unflinching courage, zeal, and patience, which she has ever done.”

D&C 24:1c *“Behold, thy sins are forgiven thee, and thou art an elect lady.”*

The Parable of the Virtuous Woman, by its very existence, gives evidence to the importance of a woman’s role in society. God knowing the power and influence He gave women, also gave this parable as a blueprint for women to follow. It is a blueprint to direct our pathway through life and point us to a higher spiritual level. It gives all women a standard to strive for. In her many numerous roles as a woman, wife, mother, teacher, daughter, sister, grandmother, aunt, friend, co-worker, a woman’s influence is felt and makes a difference not only in her family but in society as a whole. The statement “the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world” is based in truth.

We see the importance of a woman’s influence recorded in the lives of the women listed above, but there are many other examples. It was Eve who influenced Adam to eat the fruit. Rahab’s faith saved her household. She is listed in the lineage of Christ. Abigail’s wisdom saved her household from the wrath of King David. Delilah’s influence brought destruction upon Samson. Jezebel’s influence not only brought destruction to King Ahab, but to her sons and even all of Israel. Women have great influence; the choice is ours as to how we use it—if we choose to influence for good or evil. Let us choose to be virtuous women influencing for good, not only in our families but also in the church, our communities and the world.

THE VIRTUOUS WOMAN AND THE RUBY

Proverbs 31:10



THE MEANING OF RUBY IN THE HEBREW

Strong's Hebrew root word for "Ruby" = 6443-6434= Pearl or Jewel; in the fem. = Bulwark, Tower

Strong's Hebrew root word for "Jewel" = 5459 = Jewels, Peculiar Treasure, Special

We established in our class that the foundation upon which the Virtuous Woman has built is "Fear of the Lord" (see verse 30) but Malachi puts the two together in Mal. 3:16-18.

RUBY = JEWELS

THEY THAT FEAR THE LORD ARE GOD'S JEWELS

Jesus even quoted this scripture in 3 Nephi 11:19-20

Malachi 3:16-18 **16** Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. **17** And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. **18** Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not.

RUBY = PECULIAR TREASURE

Exodus 19:5-6 **5** Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine; **6** And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation.

1 Peter 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

RUBY = AS A BULWARK

Used in the Feminine Means = Stronghold, Fortress, A Rampart of Protection

Jewish Tradition = In the Jewish tradition of keeping the Sabbath the woman would light the candles and then Psalms 31 was read by the husband. This Jewish tradition was to signify the power and influence a woman had over her home. The husband was the head of the home but the great power and influence of the woman, in that area, was acknowledged by this tradition. She was considered a **bulwark** in the framework of the Jewish family.



A woman who is sanctified and obedient to the commandments of God = is a stronghold, fortress, rampart of protection and a bulwark for her husband and children.

I believe that Emma Smith was an example of such a Virtuous Woman who proved to be a bulwark for her husband and children. When Joseph was away from home, many times thrown into prison, Emma was a bulwark for her children. She also supported Joseph by her prayers and letters and doing all she could for him during such terrible times. Her love and support sustained him even while he was in prison. During his imprisonment at the Liberty Jail Emma fled with the saints into Illinois. She walked across the frozen Mississippi, pregnant, and with small children clinging to her skirts and with the manuscript for the Inspired Version tied around her waist. What a Bulwark she was for her husband, children and yes even the church.



Emma Smith and the Stewardship of Priesthood

by Elbert A Smith, Saints Herald, April 6, 1926



Many, many times God has depended on the women of the church. Many years ago in Nauvoo there lived a widow to whom He entrusted the care of three sons. She was inducted and invited to go here or there, but she said to herself, "I have no friend greater than God. I have no place to go but home. I will stay there and maintain the dignity and sanctity of our home." She did that and reared her children, so that when God came knocking at the door of the humble house and said, "Where is Joseph, who is to be the President of the church?" she answered, "Here is Joseph!" And when God said, "Where is Alexander who is to be the Patriarch of the church and under whose hands the people of the church will be blessed?" she answered, "Here is Alexander!" And when God said, "Where is David, the sweet singer of Israel, who never saw his father?" she answered, "Here is David!" She kept the faith and saved her sons to the church and that is perhaps the reason Brother Fred M., Brother Israel A., and I are all here today. A woman saved us to the church. Perhaps that does not mean a great deal to you, but it means a great deal to us.

Emma Smith and the Stewardship of Priesthood

Excerpts from Saints Herald January 26, 1927

It is not given to woman to have the stewardship of priesthood. No, she is not asked to bear the stewardship of priesthood. All that she is asked to do is to go down into the valley of travail from whence come new souls and come up out of that valley bearing in her arms the male child that shall be a priest, to take him to her breast and feed him and warm him and clothe him; and as he grows older, to teach the priest, who later shall teach the people.

Excerpts from Saints Herald January 26, 1927 (continued)

When he grows into manhood and becomes the very apple of her eye, as beautiful to her as Apollo, as wise as Solomon, as brave as David and Daniel, and as good as John the Beloved—when she has invested in him all that she is, and ever expects to have been—then to give him to the Church and to God; to pray for him all the days of his ministry; and when she has grown old in body and fatal disease has set its hand upon her and she stands in the valley of the shadow of death between the pillars of eternal mystery, to bear, as my good mother did, her last testimony to the divinity of this work that will ring like a golden bell in the heart of her son forever; perchance later to come back unseen and invisible to observe her son and see whether he has kept the trust.

No, it is not given to woman to have stewardship of priesthood; but every priest sometime is the stewardship of some woman.

Emma Smith was not ordained as a priest. She could not baptize, she could not lay hands on the sick. All she could do was to stand in the doorway of the Mansion House and watch Joseph as he rode away that June morning, go out to the gate to catch the last glimpse of him as he rode over the hill to Carthage; and when the dead body was brought back to her, make a clean bed to lay him on, and after he was buried to set up the altar in her home, close her eyes to appeals to here or there and say, “I have no home but this and no friend but God;” to establish her “school of religious education;” and teach Joseph and Alexander and David—and later give to the Church two men for the Presidency and one for the Quorum of Twelve. She did not have the stewardship of priesthood; but three high priests were her stewardship.

When Mary was crowded out so there was no place for her in human habitation, and she must needs lay herself down on the straw in the manger—and the Son of God, from the courts of glory, crept into her arms, He became her stewardship. She taught him—the One who should teach all men. When she took Him to the Temple to be blessed Simeon took Him from her arms and said, “Mary, because of him a sword shall pierce through thy very soul.”

Think you that during those forty days and forty nights when He wrestled Satan in the wilderness, Mary slept? And when He was in the Garden of Gethsemane and the Twelve Apostles could not keep awake, not one hour to watch with Him, when they who had the stewardship of priesthood all slept; do you think Mary slept? And when she saw Him hanging on the cross...No, she did not have the stewardship of priesthood; but the great High Priest of our profession...was a woman’s stewardship.

So it may finally be when his work is done and the minister comes into the presence of God, and God says, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant,” He will turn to the man’s wife and mother and say, “Exceedingly well done, good and faithful servants; enter in also with him into my joy. Without you, he could never have served; without you, he could never have joy.”