




WISDOM

| The Wisdom of Women

Proverbs 3:19

Adonai by Wisdom founded the earth, by understanding He established the heavens, by His knowledge the deep burst open and the dew condenses from the sky.



Adonai made me (wisdom) as the beginning of
His way, the first of His ancient works. I was
appointed before the world, before the start,
before the earth's beginnings...

From eternity I wisdom was
appointed from the beginning before
the world began...when He laid out
earth's foundations – then I was the
craftsman beside Him

(Prov. 8.23,30)

ANE: Wisdom an architectural expression

- Humans imitate divine wisdom
- Wisdom produces Order
- Divine building by wisdom is the model for human housebuilding

Creation was an act of house building and the Creator was the wise, knowledgeable, and discerning architect.

Jeremiah 51:15

He made earth with His might, He established the world with His Wisdom, and with His understanding spread (like a tent) out the heavens.

Malkut. kingdom

Kallah: A Divine spouse

Craftsmanship or skill in any
area of human endeavor lies at
the heart of biblical Wisdom

- World/cosmos is a building
- Creation is the act of building it
- *Banah*: to build
- applied to the building trades:
architect, smith, craftsman,
artisan, carpenter

Proverbs 24:3,4

By wisdom a house is built, by understanding (binah) it is made secure and by knowledge its rooms are filled with all kinds of costly and pleasant possessions.



A man's
wife is
called his
house

The Temple and the City of Jerusalem

- Mother, sister, daughter, wife
- Beloved, Spirit, Bride
- **As the architect of worlds, she creates life**



The Temple/Jerusalem

- A wife
- Community of Israel

ANE: textile/weaving was a metaphor for women's wisdom

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All wise hearted women who weave cloth for the Tabernacle with wisdom have their counterpart in the Woman of Valor of Proverbs 31 (R. Van Leeuwen)

Proverbs 31


- Allegory of a woman named Wisdom
- Wisdom is skilled woman
- The noble wife of the king
- A tribute to Bathsheba – wife
- She personifies the Spirit (Wisdom)
- *YHVH* is Wisdom's husband

She knows the things of old and
divines the things to come. She
foresees signs and wonders and the
issues of seasons and times. I
determined therefore to take her unto
me to live with me knowing that she is
one who would give me good
[thoughts] of counsel and encourage
me in cares and grief.

(Wisdom of Solomon 8.1-4,7-9)

Young, virgin women weaving in Temple

- Weavers of the curtain and priestly garments
- Legend – Mary chosen to make veils for the Temple (scarlet and purple)
- While weaving – Gabriel appeared with good news of birth of messiah
- One of 7 virgins chosen from family of David



- Apocalypse of Baruch: Virgins weave fine linen and silk with the gold of ophir.

- Rashi: King David's mother engaged in weaving the Temple curtain.

Ben Sira

Those who work with their hands keep
stable the fabric of the world and their
prayer is in the practice of the trade.

She works with eager hands: Woman of Valor



Women wove the fabric for the tents - stitched together the panels as the house grew.

- Semitic languages spirit grammatically fem.
- Extra-Biblical writings fem.
- Greek pneuma grammatically neutral
- Close of 2nd C HS no longer feminine
- Latin HS is masculine
- Gnostics she remains feminine
exaltation of virgin Mary

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- By the close of the 2nd C. Holy Spirit was no longer widely viewed as feminine
 - Greek: pneuma grammatically neutral
 - Latin: Holy Spirit is masculine

- 4th C Ephrem HS as mother of Yeshua
- By 6th Aramaic “ruha” became masculine
- traces of feminine HS still in liturgy
- 7th C HS is shekinah, divine presence
- 10th C Kabbala cemented shekinah as feminine

- Aramaic – Ruha feminine until 4th C
- By 4th C. Holy Spirit was a shapeless male entity sent by the Father to inspire the church.
- For the Gnostics – she was feminine

In the Jewish tradition, the Holy Spirit (wisdom) was an independent angel who existed before creation and was co-creator with G-d. She was enthroned next to her husband in clouds of heaven.

Clement of Alexandria states that she
[Holy Spirit] is an indwelling bride.

2nd Fragment from Gospel of Hebrews

Jesus said, Just now my mother, the
Holy Spirit, took me by one of my
hairs and bore me up onto the great
mountain Tabor.

The Acts of Thomas, a legendary account of the Apostle Thomas's travels to India, contains prayers invoking the Holy Spirit as the Mother of all creation and compassionate mother.

Gospel of Thomas

Jesus declares that his disciples must hate their earthly parents but love the Father and the Mother as He does, “for my mother gave me falsehood but my true mother gave me life.”

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Jerusalem
above
is free
and she
is our
mother
Gal. 4.26

3rd C Ephrem Syriac church

- Holy Spirit as the mother
- She is feminine and the mother of Yeshua
- His immersion, “This is my beloved son”
- Waters of baptism a womb from which we are reborn and the Spirit is the mother who gives birth to us

- 4th c. Mary is Virgin, bride, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven
- 6th c. traces of feminine Holy Spirit survive in liturgical writings
- 7th c. feminine spirit emerges as the Shekinah
- 10th c. Kabbalists

Psalm 14

Wise women build (banah) their houses!

Wisdom to the understanding (bin) is easy.

Wisdom of the prudent is to understand (bin)
his way.

In the heart of the one who understands (bin)
rests wisdom.

Women possess a certain power, that when properly cultivated, exceeds its counterpart in men. This intellectual power is called BINAH.

- Matriarchs used *binah* to create the Jewish people
- Women's intuition = read between the lines
- Symbolized by the shekinah

Mother's Torah: BatSheva (house/daughter of 7)

The Proverbs of Solomon: to know wisdom and instruction, to perceive words of understanding (bin)...the understanding one will possess wise counsel, to understand a proverb and an interpretation, the words of the wise and their riddles.

I Corinthians 2:7

Yet, there is a Wisdom that we are speaking to those who are mature enough for it. But it is not the Wisdom of this world or of this world's leaders who are in the process of passing away

On the contrary we are communicating a secret Wisdom from God which has been hidden until now but which, before history began God had decreed would bring us glory.

The question is not why is there evil in the world. The question is why is there good in the world.

Dennis Prager





Dennis Prager:

Good intentions without wisdom leads to evil

Our elites are people devoid of wisdom

Elites are fools: they were never taught wisdom

One must study wisdom to know how to do good

Fools do a great deal of harm

Bible is greatest source of wisdom

- Wisdom = moral virtue
- America has substituted knowledge for wisdom
- Most foolish institutions are universities
- The road to a good world is paved with wisdom