

The Real Story of Ruth

(Does the bible call her a “Virtuous Woman” or one of “Strength and Determination”?)

Penned by a Servant of God
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A Strong Character

“Don’t be afraid, my daughter. I will do whatever you say. The whole town knows that you are a woman who has strength of character.” (Ruth 3:11 God’s Word translation)

That passage above conveys the true meaning of the Hebrew word “ḥayil” which means a woman of strong character. So, why does most other bibles translations use the word “virtuous,” which we know, simply means to be “chaste.” Are they afraid that a determined women who presents a strong character, might out doe some of us weak men? For a strong and determined woman is not only one who is “chaste” in character, but one who gets the job done as well. This we see true both in the book of Ruth as well as in Proverbs where we see an example of a perfect wife.



Now, let’s first look into the biblical story of the widowed woman Ruth. For she being Moabite, left her own country and chose to become part of the Children of Israel (read the story for yourself for more details). And being instructed by her Israeli mother-in-law Naomi, she uncovered the feet of a sleeping man named Boaz, thus showing him that she wanted to engage him in a sexual act and thus become his wife. And we know it worked, for in the process of time they did get married and their male child became part of the lineage of Jesus Christ himself. However, there are those who feel that they need to sterilize the word of God. For they falsely teach that the uncovering one’s feet back then was a practice of humility that was performed by a man’s servant, thus having nothing to do with sex at all. (FYI: Ruth was written over 2400 years ago and so there is no way to proof that servants did this back then. For we don’t see servants practicing this anywhere in the bible. However, we do see that the word “uncovered” is being used as an act of sex in Leviticus chapter 20)

Therefore, because of this watering down nonsense of God’s word, we see most translators chose to us the word “virtuous,” instead of the more acerate word such as “strong and determined.” For even though virtuousness should be practiced by all godly women, we shouldn’t corrupt scripture by using it to extinguish the fact that Ruth had sexual intentions that night. And yes, we see this kind of nonsense being displayed in other parts of the bible as well. For again, there are those who feel they need to tone down the word of God. However, thank God we do have those translations that rightly bring out the true meaning of what’s being conveyed in scripture. Therefore, we should see Ruth as a woman of strong character that was determined to became part of the children of God. Even if it meant giving Boaz a sexual hint that she wanted to become “one flesh” with him and thus become his wife. Amen.

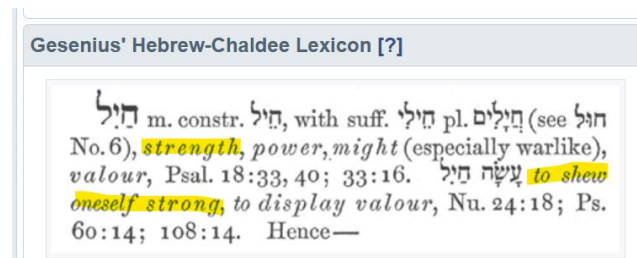
A few passages from the KJV itself that showing the word “Strength” being used instead of the misleading word “Virtuous” that being used in Ruth 3:11 as well as Proverbs:

- If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more **strength**: but wisdom is profitable to direct. (Ecclesiastes 10:10 KJV)
- In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the **strong** men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened, (Ecclesiastes 12:3 KJV)
- Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of **strength** to mingle strong drink: (Isaiah 5:22 KJV)
- How say ye, We are mighty and **strong** men for the war? (Jeremiah 48:14 KJV)
- Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their **strength**. (Joel 2:22 KJV)
- The LORD God is my **strength**, and he will make my feet like hinds' [feet], and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments. (Habakkuk 3:19 KJV)

Below are a few passages from a Bible version that gets it right when it comes down to the character of both Ruth's and the Proverb's wife. For it's not toning down scripture by using the word “Virtue.”

- At midnight the man was shivering. When he turned over, he was surprised to see a woman lying at his feet. “Who are you?” he asked. She answered, “I am Ruth. Spread the corner of your garment over me because you are a close relative who can take care of me.” Boaz replied, “May the LORD bless you, my daughter. This last kindness—that you didn't go after the younger men, whether rich or poor—is better than the first. Don't be afraid, my daughter. I will do whatever you say. The whole town knows that you are **a woman who has strength of character**. It is true that I am a close relative of yours, but there is a relative closer than I. Stay here tonight. In the morning if he will agree to take care of you, that is good. He can take care of you. But if he does not wish to take care of you, then, I solemnly swear, as the LORD lives, I will take care of you myself. Lie down until morning.” (Ruth 3:8-13 God's Word translation)
- A wife with strength of character is the crown of her husband, but the wife who disgraces him is like bone cancer. (Proverbs 12:4 God's Word translation)
- Who can find a wife with a **strong character**? She is worth far more than jewels. Her husband trusts her with all his heart, and he does not lack anything good. She helps him and never harms him all the days of her life. Proverbs (31:10-12 God's Word translation)

Below is a clipping from blueletterbible.org showing words other than “virtuous” being used for Ruth 3:11. I firmly believe that the word “virtuous” is a bad choice of the Hebrew word “hayil” and doesn't fit the context properly.



Below is the meaning of the word “virtuous” which doesn’t fit the context of the passage in Ruth 3:11. A better translation would be the use of words such as “strong” or “determined” that fits both Ruth’s character as well as the perfect wife described in Proverbs



vir·tu·ous
[ˈvɜːtʃ(ə)wəs]

adjective

virtuous (adjective)

- having or showing high moral standards:
"she considered herself very virtuous because she neither drank nor smoked"
 - archaic*
chaste (typically used of a woman).

Origin
Middle English: from Old French vertuous, from late Latin virtuosus, from virtus 'virtue'.

Below is a clearer definition (from “Copilot” using the Edge browser) of what Ruth 3:11 is conveying concerning Ruth herself:

Ruth, a biblical figure whose remarkable journey is filled with valuable insights, exemplifies both **strength** and **determination**. Let's explore her story:

1. Unwavering Loyalty to Naomi:

- After the deaths of their husbands, Ruth's mother-in-law, **Naomi**, urged her and her sister-in-law, Orpah, to return to their own families. Orpah chose to follow Naomi's advice, but Ruth's loyalty transcended blood ties.
- Ruth made a heartfelt declaration to Naomi: "Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God."
- This unwavering loyalty demonstrated Ruth's deep commitment and love for Naomi, teaching us valuable lessons about commitment and the enduring power of love.

2. Hard Work and Diligence:

- Upon arriving in Bethlehem, Ruth took the initiative to provide for herself and Naomi through diligent work in the fields.
- She understood the importance of hard work and was willing to put in the necessary effort to ensure their survival.

3. Submission to God's Plan:

- Ruth's story teaches us that true strength lies in our willingness to submit to God's will, trusting in His provision and leading.

- Her humble submission played out in her interactions with Boaz, demonstrating her faithfulness and resilience.

4. **Not Virtuous in the Traditional Sense:**

- Ruth's virtue is not defined by perfection. She faced uncertainty, poverty, and societal challenges.
- Yet her determination to stay with Naomi reveals her perseverance and resilience, even while dealing with her own grief over her late husband and living in a foreign land.

In summary, Ruth's legacy is one of loyalty, love, and faithfulness. Her choices inspire and guide us on our own journey to blessings, emphasizing the enduring power of character and trust in divine providence.

Source(s)

1. [Rise in strength – Ruth, living a purposeful life. - Girls' Brigade ...](#)
2. [Lessons from the Book of Ruth: A Woman of Strength](#)