

“A Virtuous woman...her price is far above rubies.” Pr. 31:10

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Mother’s Day, May 9th

God compares a “virtuous woman” to Rubies! The Bible word for “virtuous” is Hayil and basically means “Strong and Courageous!” How does someone become “Strong and Courageous?” Hayil comes from “khood” which basically means to be “wounded” in order to be “shaped”.

Why does God compare such a woman to Rubies?

1. They’re both extremely rare.

A. Rubies come from raw (and rare) corundum.

- 1) Corundum is made up of densely packed aluminum and oxygen atoms and is the 2nd hardest mineral, known to man!
 - a) In its natural “raw form”, it’s coarse and colorless.
 - b) In its rare form it’s crystalized.
- 2) Rubies are formed when the right amount of chromium atoms are substituted for a few of the aluminum ones in the corundum.
 - a) If there’s too much iron or silica (*The most abundant minerals on earth*) Rubies won’t form!

B. A truly “Virtuous” Woman (or man) is also rare.

- 1) The raw (natural) state is self-centered! Eccl 7:26-29; Phil. 2:21
- 2) Just as the Chromium must replace the Aluminum in the Corundum in order to form the “Ruby”, so God’s Grace must replace our “goals”. (aka: self-focused interests)
Grace: (charis) literally means God’s influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life.
“He must increase, but I must decrease” Jn. 3:30
 - a) God’s Spirit works in our hearts, seeks to transform us from “Self-focused” to God/other focus. (Phil. 2:3-13)
- 3) The “Virtuous” woman of Pr. 31 models this “other’s focus”. (Vs 11,15,20,23,27)

2. They’re Both formed under Pressure!

A. Rubies are formed under intense conditions.

- 1) Rubies are formed by tectonic plates smashing together forcing limestone deposits deep into the earth where intense heat (>1,200 degrees) and pressure morph the limestone into marble.
 - a) Then molten granite bubbles up into the marble replacing some of the silica with aluminum.

B. The Virtues of Strength, Grace and Faith are also formed under the pressure of disappointments and hardship. (James 1:2,3; Romans 5:3-5)

- 1) Notice some the “pressures” God used to shape this “virtuous woman” of Pr. 31:
 - a) Marriage. Vs 11,12, 23
 - b) Domestic Responsibilities. Vs 13-15, 21,22, 27,28
 - c) Parenting. Vs. 21, 28
 - d) “Business” Vs 16-19, 25
 - e) Community service: Vs 20

3.They both become more “precious” when “shaped” by a master craftsman! Mal. 3:17

Mal. 3:17 *"And they shall be mine, saith the LORD, in that day when I make up my jewels"*

A. A rough ruby is only worth a fraction of the value of a "cut" and "polished" gem!

- 1) 1 carat rough ruby may be worth \$35 while the "cut" ruby may be worth thousands!
- 2) The master jeweler "cuts" the Ruby so as to best reflect the light! (Mt. 5:16)

B. God uses "all things" to help "conform us into the image of His son" Ro. 8:28,29

Mal. 3:17 *"they shall be mine, saith the LORD, in that day when I make up my jewels"* Peculiar Treasure!

- 1) God often uses the many "blows" of life as His chisels. 2 Cor. 4:7-18; Ro. 5:3-5; James 1:2,3
- 2) God often uses "rough" people or problems as the "files" to "polish" us. 2 Cor. 12:7-9; Job 23:10;

Conclusion: Is. 48:10 *"Behold, I have refined thee... I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."*

1) Why does God go to such trouble? Is. 48:11 *"For mine own sake... will I do it: for how should my name be polluted?"* (also Job 23:10)

1 Pt 2:9 *"ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people... (peripoiēsis: a purchased and preserved possession!) that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:"* (aka: reflect the light of His Grace and Love!)

2) Why should we "cooperate" with such a painful process?

- **For our Families:** 31:28 *"Her children rise up, and call her blessed; her husband also praiseth her."*
- **For our Lord.** Vs 20 *"a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised."*
 - a) Our families may not "recognize" or "respond" to virtue, But God does and will!
- **For ourselves:** vs 31 *"Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her."*

(Mt. 6:20,21) Note: It's in the context of people thinking "it is vain to serve the Lord" (Mal. 2:14) That God reminds us that he's in the process of "making up my jewels." Mal. 3:17

Application: Since God's in the "Jewel making" business:

- 1) He's seeking to "shape" you into one of his "jewels". (Mal. 3:17; Ro. 8:28,29)
 - *Are you willing to cooperate with Him as he seeks to purify and shape you?* (Is. 64:8; Job 23:10)
- 2) He's seeking to partner with you to "shape" others into one of his "jewels".
(Pr. 22:6; Heb. 10:24)
 - *Are you willing to look beyond the "rocks" and recognize the "rubies" in others?*
 - *Are you willing to partner with God in this process of "purging" so as to bring out the best in them?* (1 Cor 3:9; Mt. 11:29)

Who was the human teacher of this "divine lesson" to Solomon?

2 Sam 12:24 *"David comforted Bathsheba his and she bare a son, ...called his name Solomon: and the LORD loved him."*

David "nicknamed" Solomon "Jedidiah" (Beloved of God) 2 Sam. 12:25

Bathsheba had her own nickname for Solomon. Pr. 31:1

"The words of King Lemuel (belonging/dedicated to God) the prophecy that his mother taught him."

