

## Introduction

In the Hebrew Bible are found many stories of Israelite patriarchs, warriors, brave prophets, and tricksters both male and female. Ancient Israel possessed a well-developed heroic tradition, even if it is less consistent about what a hero is than the heroic tradition of Greece and Rome. There is, indeed, a great deal of variation among the Israelite heroes in how they are remembered. Noah, Abraham, and Moses, for example, are sometimes improved upon by later tradition, losing many of their very human imperfections; they become almost superhuman friends of God. Philo, Josephus, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the New Testament, and rabbinic literature all transmit glorified versions of these heroes. Hindy Najman treats well the process by which these heroes were improved upon to become nearly perfect, almost godlike. Just as there was in Greece a concept of *theōsis*, becoming like a god, this process was found in Israel as well. In Gen 1:26–27, it is emphasized that God made the human in the image of God, and God later says, “Be holy as I am holy” (Lev 20:26). This inspired an ideal of *imitatio dei*, imitation of God or becoming like God. There was in this later period a recognition that some heroes of the past attained a higher status, that of a perfected moral agent. Says Najman, “Those who achieve new levels of wisdom and being godlike, but not being God, have achieved this through internalizing the instruction and living in accordance with the details of the law and ultimately being able to internalize the law of nature.”<sup>1</sup> She traces this interest to Jewish texts at

<sup>1</sup> Hindy Najman, “*Imitatio Dei* and the Formation of the Subject in Ancient Judaism,” *JBL* 140 (2021): 309–23. On Greek *theōsis*, see Gretchen Reydam-Schils, “‘Becoming Like God’ in Platonism and Stoicism,” in *From Stoicism to Platonism: The Development of*

the turn of the Common Era and perceives a program of human improvement, what Michel Foucault called a technology of the self: an intentional discipline of forging oneself into a better person.<sup>2</sup> Two other scholars, Arjen Bakker and Carol Newsom, have explored similar developments, the latter producing a larger study that will be treated below.<sup>3</sup> What they emphasize is the desire in Israel to attain a higher spiritual state by focusing on the perfected nature of the greatest biblical heroes.

Yet here I want to move in a different direction. These explorations of perfected Israelite heroes are found almost entirely at the beginning of the Second Temple period – the sixth century BCE – and at the end of this period – the first century CE, yet these scholars find very few examples of this perfectionism in the centuries that lie between, and for good reason.<sup>4</sup> In the six-hundred-year period of the Second Temple, Jewish heroes are often engaged in a very different way: not as perfected figures but as protagonists who are passive, introspective, feminized. In fact, they are imperfect. It may seem an odd distinction, but Najman, Bakker, and Newsom focus on perfectionism of the greater heroes – Noah, Abraham, Moses – while I am interested in imperfectionism and lesser heroes and heroines, figures such as Ezra, Tobit, Daniel, Esther, Susanna, and others equally fallible. It is their imperfect natures, the humanness of the figures, that attracts my attention, especially their moments of decision and character development: a figure who is perfect cannot develop, but a figure who is imperfect can. The approaches of Najman, Bakker, and Newsom and my own are not mutually exclusive but are actually quite complementary: the studies of perfectionism and

*Philosophy 100 BCE–100 CE*, ed. Troels Engberg-Pedersen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 142–58.

<sup>2</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Pantheon, 1971); *The Use of Pleasure*, vol. 2 of *The History of Sexuality*, 3 vols (New York: Pantheon, 1985–1986), 63–77; *The Care of the Self*, vol. 3 of *History of Sexuality*; “Technologies of the Self,” in *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, vol. 1 of *Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984*, 3 vols. (New York: New Press, 1997), 223–51.

<sup>3</sup> Arjen Bakker, “Sages and Saints: Continuous Study and Transformation in *Musar le-Mevin* and *Serek ha-Yahad*,” in *Tracing Sapiential Traditions in Ancient Judaism*, ed. Hindy Najman, JSJSupp174 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 106–18; Carol Newsom, *The Spirit Within Me: Self and Agency in Ancient Israel and Second Temple Judaism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021).

<sup>4</sup> The exception is passages from the apocalyptic section of Daniel 7–12. *Jubilees*, another visionary text, would have provided them some passages regarding Abraham and his perfectionism, for instance, *Jub.* 11:14–23:32. There we encounter the very Greek-seeming notion that Abraham becomes a monotheist by a rational deduction, 12:16–21; cf. Philo, *On Abraham* 69–71.

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imperfectionism each pushes the other into sharper relief. We will find that lesser figures reveal a great deal about the reflection on the moral agent in Israel. Imperfection is good to think with.

This study, then, investigates the imperfect, passive, often feminized protagonist in Israelite literature in the Second Temple period (sixth century BCE–first century CE). A word that will be used often here is “problematized,” and I mean this in a fairly literal way: an aspect of an ancient character’s makeup is depicted as atypical or negative, perceived in its ancient context most likely as a moral problem, even if that problem represents a stage of development or a means of advancing the theme. Imperfections of the earlier patriarchs were, of course, already presented in Genesis and Exodus. Abraham in Genesis 16 fails to intervene between Sarah and Hagar. Joseph in Genesis 37 seems heedless of his brothers’ feelings. Such examples are often noted in regard to the Golden Age of preexilic Israelite literature, but one of the achievements of postexilic Jewish literature was to feature second-register heroes as moral agents and also to problematize them in a way different from the way the agent was earlier problematized. In any culture, what people love is precisely what is problematized in cultural productions. This constitutes a principle that will be applied often in this study: we problematize what we love. In the Second Temple period, this process is quite varied. The protagonists are sometimes male and sometimes female. The men are often feminized and the women either feminized (Susanna) or masculinized (Judith). The antagonists, who provide negative models, are also sometimes feminized or problematized. There is no one pattern that dominates in the Second Temple period, but by examining many examples it is possible to draw overall conclusions that are significant. We begin with the observation that common in this period is a passive protagonist: Ezra (but not Nehemiah), Tobit and Sarah (but not Tobit’s wife Anna nor his son Tobias), Esther (but not Mordecai), Daniel, Susanna, Achior in the Book of Judith (but not Judith), and Jesus in Mark (but not Jesus in Matthew, Luke, or John). Very similar are also such anonymous figures as the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 52–53 and the righteous one in Wisdom of Solomon 2–5.<sup>5</sup> Occasional parallels may be seen outside Israel, such as

<sup>5</sup> In the 1980 collection of essays, *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism: Profiles and Paradigms*, ed. George W. E. Nickelsburg and John J. Collins, Septuagint and Cognate Studies (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1980), leading scholars in Second Temple Judaism analyzed a variety of figures. As important as this collection was at the time, in terms of a comparison of figures or the outlining of a trajectory there has been limited follow-up. My list of texts and the focus on the character of the protagonist is heavily indebted to the

*Story of Abikar* in Assyria, the feminized and passive Jason and masculinized Medea in the *Argonautica*, the feminized Aeneas and the masculinized Dido in the *Aeneid* – though Aeneas ends in a more masculinized mode and Dido in a more feminine – and the *Instruction of Ankhsheshonqy* and *Instruction of Any* in Egypt. But our attention will remain mainly on Israel.<sup>6</sup>

One wonders why these questions had not been raised before in regard to the Second Temple texts, but this period in Jewish literature has been surprisingly under-theorized. In relation to the classic texts of the Hebrew Bible, likely written during the First Temple period, we have seen a wealth of deeply examined theoretical studies, some of which are discussed below, and the same is true for the texts of the New Testament and early Christianity, classics, and rabbinic Judaism. Yet the literature of the Second Temple period, though analyzed historically and in great detail by many notable scholars, has not received the same *theoretical* attention. To state this in a different way: the literature of Second Temple Israel has not provoked theoretical reflection even though the bodies of literature on every side of it have. The reason is probably simple: theory follows problems, and in regard to the Second Temple the stakes have been perceived as lower. The Jewish and Christian traditions are not understood to be *founded* on these texts, *even if they were*. One of my goals, then, in this study is to paint an unpainted age.

work of Nickelsburg; see his “The Genre and Function of the Markan Passion Narrative,” along with my response, in *George W. E. Nickelsburg in Perspective: An Ongoing Dialogue of Learning*, ed. Jacob Neusner and Alan J. Avery-Peck, 2 vols. (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004), 2.504–12, and also George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism and Early Christianity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972). He had brought together many of these texts to pose a developmental schema of the hero of wisdom in Israel, which he also spotted as an influence on the passion narrative in the Gospel of Mark. Neither in Nickelsburg’s study nor my own is there any desire to uncover some teleological arc that moves from Jewish wisdom to culminate in Jesus. The tradition of Wellhausen and others that Israel went from politics to a universal religion after the exile, culminating in Jesus, does not resonate in Nickelsburg’s work or my own.

<sup>6</sup> Relevant here is also Aristotle on *akrasia*, or the lack of self-mastery, but it is one thing to examine emotions *at a distance*, as would Aristotle or a Stoic philosopher, and quite another for a speaker to reflect on his or her own emotions *from the inside*. However, by the end of our period, this occurs in Stoicism; see Reydam-Schils, *The Roman Stoics: Self, Responsibility, and Affection* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 15–26. The Greek novels could be considered an orgy of examining emotions from the inside; see below on polypathy in novels.

## FEMINIZED AND MASCULINIZED PROTAGONISTS

A number of literary developments will be considered in regard to the texts under study, beginning with feminized and masculinized characters. The various discussions here of dualities like feminine/masculine and passive/active, coupled with the discussion of interiorization and a self, may sound at first too modern in their assumptions. There is even a danger that merely invoking gender codes is heteronormative; that is, there is a danger of imposing modern gender codes in an ancient context where they do not apply. Yet I am not here investigating how women and men actually lived out their lives but how femininity and masculinity were constructed in ancient texts. Although women characters are often richly depicted, the stories cannot be mined to provide accurate portrayals of the relations of women and men in society. We do not know what power a Sarah (in the Book of Tobit) or an Esther could wield. At the same time, to assume that women held little power while men exercised power is to accept without questioning male dualistic assumptions about who has agency in society. Rather, an effort will be made here to be sensitive to the way that the ancient texts constructed feminine and masculine.

It is inevitable, of course, that in exploring ancient social codes of any kind scholars will assume modern categories, but with difficulty one can try to recover ancient, native cultural codes. The differences are often significant. In the case of masculine and feminine, two examples of this difference can be taken up for consideration: crying and descriptions of beauty. Although in modern European-American culture masculinity is marked by the repression of crying, in ancient cultures, and in many other modern cultures as well, weeping would be expected of men in periods of mourning and in certain other situations, such as reconciliation.<sup>7</sup> Jacob, for instance, weeps when he is reunited with Esau and upon first meeting

<sup>7</sup> On the cultural aspect of the weeping of both men and women in the Hebrew Bible, see Milena Kirova, *Performing Masculinity in the Hebrew Bible* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2020), 150–65. On weeping at the moment of reconciliation, see Eric X. Jarrard, “Reconciliation in the Joseph Story,” *BibInt* 29 (2021): 148–86. On weeping as part of mourning, see Gary Anderson, *A Time to Mourn, A Time to Dance: The Expression of Grief and Joy in Israelite Religion* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1991), 25–40; and Saul M. Olyan, *Biblical Mourning: Ritual and Social Dimensions* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), *passim*. Attempts to surface ancient evidence of gender codes include Cynthia R. Chapman, *The Gendered Language of Warfare in the Israelite-Assyrian Encounter*, HSM 62 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 48–49; and T. M. Lemos, “The Emasculation of Exile: Hypermasculinity and Feminization in the Book of Ezekiel,” in *Interpreting Exile: Displacement and Deportation in Biblical and Modern Contexts*, ed.

Rachel (Gen 29:11; 33:4), as Jonathan and David also weep when they reunite (1 Sam 20:41). Nehemiah, in the briefest notice imaginable, weeps when he hears of the decrepit state of Jerusalem (Neh 1:4); Ezra wept with the people even more. In most of these cases, there is no reason to suggest any feminization. (Yet does Ezra go too far? His unusual display of emotions will be addressed in Chapter 2.) In ancient Greece, the depiction of men crying also presents discrepancies. In Homeric epic, the heroes are often given to bouts of crying for each other.<sup>8</sup> Achilles cries often in the *Iliad* and not just for Patroclus. Mirroring these acts in heaven, even Zeus cries over Sarpedon and Hector (although Sarpedon is his son; *Iliad* 16.450; 22.169). This motif probably reflects a literary irony concerning the special world of heroes and did not reflect actual practices of elite men. The gender codes of heroes do not likely conform to the audience's practices. Heroes, rather, cry *for each other*, in the same way that they sometimes have sex with each other: they exhibit this kind of treatment for each other because they are the offspring of gods and engage in special relationships not available to typical humans. And yet, the motif of heroes crying fell out of Greek literature. By the classical era, Socrates could argue that elite men should not cry so easily; the *Iliad* should be edited to remove the scenes of heroes crying (*Republic* 3. 387e–88a).

Are descriptions of physical beauty similarly culture-specific? The answer here is also surprisingly uncertain. Regarding the important case of Joseph, Rachel Adelman points out that the words used to describe his beauty are nearly identical to those used in regard to Esther, except marked for grammatical gender: Joseph is *yefeh-to'ar viyfeh-mar'eh*, Gen 39:6, and Esther *yefat-to'ar vetovat-mar'eh*, Esth 2:7, both essentially “beautiful of form and beautiful of appearance.”<sup>9</sup> In English, the same Hebrew adjectives are translated differently to match *modern* gender assumptions: “well built and handsome” versus “shapely and beautiful.” Yet in widening our scope to rabbinic literature, Shari Lowin finds that this same set of adjectives is used to describe women

Brad E. Kelle, Frank Rithel Ames, and Jacob L. Wright (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 377–95, here at 379–80.

<sup>8</sup> Hélène Monsacré, *The Tears of Achilles* (Washington, DC: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2018).

<sup>9</sup> Rachel Adelman, *The Female Ruse: Women's Deception and Divine Sanction in the Hebrew Bible*, Hebrew Bible Monographs (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2017), 205. Cf. 1 Sam 16:12, 17:42 concerning David. It is not clear whether these two descriptions are feminized.

but not men, for instance, Rachel (*Bereshit Rabbah* 29:16–17).<sup>10</sup> The rabbis also took Joseph to be a dandy. Was Joseph in Genesis then feminized – that is, described with markers of feminine beauty – or was the marker actually gender-neutral? We will return to this question in Chapter 1.

If crying and beauty are not gendered in a consistent way across times and cultures, then we must be wary of imposing modern Western assumptions concerning other gender markers as well. Still, it can be granted that many of our judgments of gender codes in ancient texts begin with assumptions from present-day European-American culture. One significant earlier study on masculinity in the Hebrew Bible, that of David J. A. Clines, began by rehearsing Julia T. Wood's theoretical remarks on modern masculinity and then applying them in an influential study of David.<sup>11</sup> This was not a bad way to approach it. The modern construction of masculinity, according to Wood, is guided by five principles: (1) don't be female; (2) be successful; (3) be aggressive; (4) be sexual; (5) be self-reliant. We will find a number of occasions in our texts where such dualities of gender appear to be discernible, yet we must grant that evidence from the ancient world is not always available to test how these dualities would have operated. There have nevertheless been some interesting attempts to utilize evidence arising from ancient texts. Clines noted that masculine virtues include strength, wisdom, persuasive speech, beauty, and avoidance of association with women. Jon-Michael Carman and Stephen M. Wilson explored this question further; in regard to the ancient Near East, Greece, and Rome, they added to Clines' list of masculine traits heroic peer-bonding, self-control, fertility and marriage, honor, kinship solidarity, and legal manhood.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Shari Lowin, *Arabic and Hebrew Love Poems in Al-Andalus* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 123–24.

<sup>11</sup> David J. A. Clines, "David the Man: The Construction of Masculinity in the Hebrew Bible," in *Interested Parties: The Ideology of Writers and Readers of the Hebrew Bible*, JSOTSupp 205 (Sheffield: SAP, 1995), 212–41; Julia T. Wood, *Gendered Lives: Communication, Gender, and Culture* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1994), 77–81. A number of important volumes have appeared concerning biblical masculinities, among them: Ovidiu Creanga, ed., *Hebrew Masculinities Anew* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2019); Ovidiu Creanga and Peter-Ben Smit, eds., *Biblical Masculinities Foregrounded*, HBM 62 (Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2014); and Amy Kalmanofsky, *Gender-Play in the Hebrew Bible: The Ways the Bible Challenges Its Gender Norms* (London and New York: Routledge, 2017).

<sup>12</sup> Jon-Michael Carman, "Abimelech the Manly Man: Judges 9.1–57 and the Performance of Hegemonic Masculinity," *JSOT* 43 (2019): 301–16; Stephen M. Wilson, *Making Men:*



However, an interesting challenge to such approaches has also been articulated: simply expressing these traits as dualities creates a problem. Since the early contributions of Jacques Derrida, it has become a consensus conclusion that in order to construct views of the world, modern thought developed a dependence upon sharp dualisms: male/female, mind/body, culture/nature, writing/speech. These dualities operated as subconscious ways of viewing the universe, with the corollary assumption that the first element was superior to the second: male over female, mind over body, and so on. As these dualities and others have rightly been challenged in the modern context, a broad intellectual response has arisen that attempts to investigate ancient society without assuming these basic structuring dualities. Theory-conscious scholars often note the problems inherent in gender terms but then apply them anyway. Recognizing the differences between ancient and contemporary gender codes, they proceed to apply modern traits in ancient texts. Modern dualities are often critiqued as essentializing and cognicentric, but the scholars then find themselves reverting to dualities such as masculinizing versus feminizing, and this is more or less inevitable.<sup>13</sup> Our present problem, however, is how to measure the strong effects of dualistic thinking in discourse even if people's actual lives were much more complicated. A dictum will guide us: people generally live on a spectrum but think in dualities. Dualities, or in some cases hierarchies, often played out in ancient texts as much as in modern discourse. In the texts under study, femininity and masculinity as "opposite" gender aspects were performed and constructed using a rich array of cultural codes, even when there were more than two genders. While Julia Asher-Greve, for instance, can speak of categories in the ancient Near East that were outside of female and male – "castrates, eunuchs, transsexuals, and men with undescended testicles"<sup>14</sup> – the two

*The Male Coming-of-Age Theme in the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 29–46.

<sup>13</sup> Caryn Tamber-Rosenau, *Women in Drag: Gender and Performance in the Hebrew Bible and Early Jewish Literature* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2018), 1–4, acknowledges just this set of problems, although she and I differ in the negotiation of these challenges; see Chapter 4. See also Tamber-Rosenau, "A Queer Critique of Looking for 'Male' and 'Female' Voices in the Hebrew Bible," in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 479–94; Daniel Boyarin, "Gender," in *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*, ed. Mark C. Taylor (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 117–35, here at 117–18.

<sup>14</sup> Julia Asher-Greve, "Decisive Sex, Essential Gender," in *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the 47th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Helsinki,*



poles of masculine and feminine, or masculine and less masculine, are still discernible in literary discourse, and her own descriptions reflect this: the true male possessed “genital completeness, procreative capability and masculine behavior.” This can only make sense when contrasted with the un-masculine. We will examine this issue further below with regard to eunuchs, an important third gender. This problem of multiple kinds of masculinity – and femininity – was articulated by R. W. Connell in a cross-cultural study and gave rise to multiple masculinities theory.<sup>15</sup> Yet while masculinity might be expressed and performed in different ways, it was granted that an overarching ideal is often assumed in a culture, referred to as hegemonic masculinity. The interplay between a variety of lived masculinities and an overarching ideal of hegemonic masculinity both illuminated and complicated the discussion.

While some scholars have proposed that there were more than two identifiable genders in the ancient Near East, another challenge, this time in regard to the Greek and Roman worlds, suggested that these could be folded into one, a hierarchical conception of gender with male at the top and female, lesser men, eunuchs, barbarians, the colonized, and enslaved people arrayed below, all viewed as less-male. Thomas Laqueur is associated with this theory of one hierarchical gender, referred to as the one-sex body.<sup>16</sup> The hierarchy is constantly constructed, and the ideal man maintains superiority through self-mastery. “Feminized,” then, could mean the absence of masculinized traits, or more precisely, an inadequacy or deficit in terms of masculinized mastery. There has been some questioning of Laqueur’s theory, and we note as well the important contribution of Judith Butler: gender distinctions are constantly constructed, even performed and re-performed as a means of reinforcing gender roles to be

*July 2–6, 2001*, ed. Simo Parpola and Robert M. Whiting, 2 vols. (Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2002), 11–26, here at 21. In the same collection, Kathleen McCaffrey, “Reconsidering Gender Ambiguity in Mesopotamia: Is a Beard Just a Beard?” 2.379–91, here at 388, presses further on the issues of variations and proposes different terminology: “normative male, normative female, variant male, variant female.” But again, in the literary realm, and in reference to typical humans as opposed to deities and royalty, a bipolar division of masculine/less masculine is still in evidence. Variant males and variant females may also serve to reinscribe the two larger poles, male and female.

<sup>15</sup> R. W. Connell, *Masculinities*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), first published in 1995.

<sup>16</sup> Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990). A critique of Laqueur’s views was published by Helen King, *The One-Sex Body on Trial: The Classical and Early Modern Evidence* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).

played out in society. Thus, the performance of male or female roles may be constantly dualizing, even if, with Laqueur, the distinction is higher/lower rather than two separate genders placed side-by-side.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, whether we imagine proliferating genders, or a reduction of genders to one, there is still often communicated in the texts a discourse that contrasts elite male performance of power and morality, on one hand, and lesser manifestations – women, eunuchs, enslaved persons, the poor, and so on, on the other. Therefore, while we register the complexities of gender in the ancient and in our own world, we also discuss here literary explorations of character that often work with the contrast between higher forms of masculinity and lesser humanity.

In the course of this study, we will play with the overlap between “feminizing” and “de-masculinizing.” In regard to the angry or blustery tyrants and courtiers in Second Temple texts – Ahasuerus, Nebuchadnezzar, Holofernes, Haman, Ptolemy (in 3 Maccabees), and also the elders in Susanna – does their lack of masculine self-mastery feminize them? It certainly emasculates them, but is this the same thing? And while we might observe that women warriors like Judith are masculinized, are other women masculinized in more subtle ways? Lot’s daughters and Tamar (Genesis 19, 38) are non-Israelite women who are tricksters; they manipulate men. Rebekah also plays the role of the trickster (Genesis 24–27). Is a woman who is a trickster masculinized? The “woman of valor” in Prov 31:10–31 is masculinized by the way her daily labors and powers contribute to the household. It has often been noted that her label in Hebrew, *eshet-hayil*, is difficult to translate, but this is *precisely* because it is formed as a masculinized woman: “woman of power” or even “woman warrior.”<sup>18</sup> The word *hayil* is generally associated with male warriors (2 Chr 12:9), and in Proverbs this association is exploited: “She girds her arms with might and makes her arms strong” (31:17). Any beauty or sexuality, such as that found in Song of Songs, is utterly lacking, even condemned: “Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain” (31:30). The woman in Proverbs works hard to be the second man in the household, and her husband “will have no lack of gain” from her labor (31:11). This wife is a masculinized domestic warrior.

<sup>17</sup> Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

<sup>18</sup> The Greek Bible translates *eshet-hayil* as *gynē andreia*, which also appears at Sir 26:2. Often translated in English as loyal wife, it literally means manly woman. See Chapter 6 on *andreia* for women in 1 Clement 56.