

Meaning of the term 'companion'/'helper' for Man in Genesis 2

The creation account of woman mentions that the woman is to be a '**companion**' or '**helper**' for the husband/man. Some interpret this to mean the woman is to serve the man in his endeavors in a supportive role, or otherwise be a inferior, subservient domestic servant.

A standard method for identifying the meaning (or spirit of) a word/phrase in scripture is to find the same word/phrase in other scriptures.

When reviewing all the scriptures containing the Hebrew word '**ezer**' [Strong's Key H5828] commonly translated as '**companion**' and '**helper**', a much different view of God's intent for the role of the woman appears.

Strong's Key Hebrew 5828. עֵזֶר 'ezer, ay'-zer; from 5826; aid:—help.

Strong's Key Hebrew 5826. עָזַר 'azar, aw-zar'; a primitive root; to surround, i.e. protect or aid:—help, succour.

I have split the '**ezer**' verses into four categories.

Category 1: Woman References

Genesis 2:18 The LORD God said, “It is not good (good, blessing, prosperity, success, beauty) for the man to be alone. I will make a **companion** (helper) for him who corresponds (equal) to him.”

Genesis 2:20 So the man named all the animals, the birds of the air, and the living creatures of the field, but for Adam no **companion** (helper) who corresponded (equal) to him was found.

Category 2: Explicit Military References

Exodus 18:4 and the other Eliezer (for Moses had said, “The God of my father has been my help and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh”).

Deuteronomy 33:7 And this is the blessing to Judah. He said, “Listen, O LORD, to Judah’s voice, and bring him to his people. May his power be great, and may you help him against his foes.”

Deuteronomy 33:26 “There is no one like God, O Jeshurun, who rides through the sky to help you, on the clouds in majesty.

Deuteronomy 33:29 You have joy, Israel! Who is like you? You are a people delivered by the LORD, your protective shield and your exalted sword. May your enemies cringe before you; may you trample on their backs.”

Psalms 33:20 We wait for the LORD; he is our deliverer and shield.

Psalms 70:5 I am oppressed and needy. O God, hurry to me. You are my helper and my deliverer. O LORD, do not delay.

Isaiah 30:5 all will be put to shame because of a nation that cannot help them, who cannot give them aid or help, but only shame and disgrace.”

Ezekiel 12:14 All his retinue—his attendants and his troops—I will scatter to every wind; I will unleash a sword behind them.

Hosea 13:9 I will destroy you, O Israel! Who is there to help you?

Category 3: Implicit Military References

Psalms 20

2 May he send you help from his temple; from Zion may he give you support.

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7 some trust in chariots and others in horses, but we will depend on the Lord our God

Psalms 124:8 Our deliverer is the LORD, the Creator of heaven and earth.

Daniel 11:34 When they stumble, they will be granted some help. But many will unite with them deceitfully.

Category 4: General Protection References

Psalms 115

- 3 Our God is in heaven. He does whatever he pleases.
- 4 Their idols are made of silver and gold— they are man-made.
- 5 They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see,
- 6 ears, but cannot hear, noses, but cannot smell,
- 7 hands, but cannot touch, feet, but cannot walk. They cannot even clear their throats.
- 8 Those who make them will end up like them, as will everyone who trusts in them.
- 9 O Israel, trust in the LORD. He is their deliverer and protector.
- 10 O family of Aaron, trust in the LORD. He is their deliverer and protector.
- 11 You loyal followers of the LORD, trust in the LORD. He is their deliverer and protector.
- 12 The LORD takes notice of us; he will bless — he will bless the family of Israel, he will bless the family of Aaron.
- 13 He will bless his loyal followers, both young and old.
- 14 May he increase your numbers, yours and your children's.
- 15 May you be blessed by the LORD, the Creator of heaven and earth.
- 16 The heavens belong to the LORD, but the earth he has given to mankind.

Psalms 121

- 1 I look up toward the hills. From where does my help come?
- 2 My help comes from the LORD, the Creator of heaven and earth.
- 3 May he not allow your foot to slip. May your Protector not sleep.
- 4 Look! Israel's Protector does not sleep or slumber.
- 5 The LORD is your protector; the LORD is the shade at your right hand.
- 6 The sun will not harm you by day, or the moon by night.
- 7 The LORD will protect you from all harm; he will protect your life.
- 8 The LORD will protect you in all you do, now and forevermore.

Psalms 146

- 3 Do not trust in princes, or in human beings, who cannot deliver.
- 4 Their life's breath departs, they return to the ground. On that day their plans die.
- 5 How blessed is the one whose helper is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God,
- 6 the one who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, who remains forever faithful,
- 7 vindicates the oppressed, and gives food to the hungry. The LORD releases the imprisoned.
- 8 The LORD gives sight to the blind. The LORD lifts up all who are bent over. The LORD loves the godly.
- 9 The LORD protects the resident foreigner. He lifts up the fatherless and the widow, but he opposes the wicked.

Statistical Data

Total Occurrences	20	100%
• Woman	2	10%
• Military Engagements	12	60%
• explicit	9	45%
• implicit	3	15%
• General Protection*	6	30%

* 3 occurrences in one context, 2 occurrences in another

14 of 20 times (70%), 'ezer' is directly linked to God and his power to deliver from foes bent on doing harm.

Implications

Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our *image*, after our *likeness*, so *they* may *rule* over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move on the earth." 27 God created humankind in his own *image*, in the *image* of God he created them, male and female he *created* them.

Women were made in the image of God. They must then bear a likeness to God.

Genesis 2:18 The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a *companion* (an *ezer*) for him who corresponds to him."

Conclusion

- The man needs the woman to help conquer his foe!
- Maybe the devil did not attack Eve first because she was weak, but because she was strong!
- All scripture relating to women's 'place' or 'function' must be interpreted within the framework of God's intent as described in the creation account. All interpretations outside of this framework must be rejected.
- Women should accept God's vision for the woman as an 'ezer'.
- Women should take up their rightful place as an 'ezer' against evil.

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All references are from the New English Translation (NET)