

Proverbs 2:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

To deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words;

Analysis

Wisdom delivers from the strange woman (zarah - foreign, alien), the adulteress who flatters with her words. The extended warning against sexual immorality (vv.16-19) treats it as paradigmatic folly with deadly consequences. The 'strange woman' represents both literal adultery and, metaphorically, any seductive evil offering forbidden pleasure. Her flattering speech parallels the serpent's deception in Eden - sin entices through pleasant words concealing deadly consequences.

Historical Context

Adultery threatened covenant community through both family disruption and potential association with pagan fertility cult prostitution. The warning protected young men from ruin through sexual sin.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What 'strange' voices currently flatter you with promises of pleasure while concealing consequences?

2. How does biblical wisdom protect you from sexual temptation in your cultural context?

Interlinear Text

לְמַאֲשֵׁה הָנָה	לְפָאֵל בָּנָה	מִכְרֵב הָנָה
To deliver	woman	thee from the strange
H5337	H802	H2114
even from the stranger		H5237
אִמְרָה יְפָמְלִיקָה:		
with her words	which flattereth	
H561	H2505	

Additional Cross-References

Ecclesiastes 7:26 (Parallel theme): And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.

Proverbs 22:14 (Parallel theme): The mouth of strange women is a deep pit: he that is abhorred of the LORD shall fall therein.

Proverbs 23:27 (Parallel theme): For a whore is a deep ditch; and a strange woman is a narrow pit.

Proverbs 6:24 (Parallel theme): To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman.