

Proverbs 2:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God.

Analysis

This verse identifies the seductress who abandons her covenant obligations. The 'guide of her youth' likely refers to her husband, while 'covenant of her God' indicates marriage's sacred nature. Adultery isn't merely personal betrayal but covenant breaking before God. The theology here is profound: human relationships exist within divine framework, and violations of horizontal covenants simultaneously violate vertical relationship with God. This anticipates Malachi 2:14-16's teaching that marriage is a covenant witnessed by Yahweh.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern marriage contracts were legal agreements, but Israel's distinctiveness was viewing marriage as sacred covenant before God, not merely civil contract. This theological understanding elevated marriage's permanence and moral seriousness, making adultery not just social offense but religious apostasy.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does understanding marriage as covenant before God (not just personal contract) affect your view of commitment?
2. In what ways does our culture encourage abandoning covenant commitments when they become difficult?
3. What other covenant relationships (church membership, business partnerships) should be viewed with similar seriousness?

Interlinear Text

הַ עֲזָבְתָּ	אֶל וַיְהִי	נְעוּרַי יְהוָה	וְאֶת	בְּרִית	אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה
Which forsaketh	the guide	of her youth	H853	the covenant	of her God
H5800	H441	H5271		H1285	H430
וְשָׁכַחְתָּ:					
and forgetteth					
H7911					

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 3:4 (Parallel theme): Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My father, thou art the guide of my youth?

Ezekiel 16:8 (Covenant): Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine.

Proverbs 5:18 (Parallel theme): Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.