

# Proverbs 5:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman,  
and embrace the bosom of a stranger?

## Analysis

---

Why be ravished with a strange woman and embrace an adulteress? The rhetorical question expects negative answer: it makes no sense. When marital satisfaction is available, why pursue adultery? The Hebrew 'nekar' (foreign/strange) describes the outsider, while 'zarah' (strange woman/adulteress) emphasizes covenant violation. Adultery is irrational - forsaking legitimate pleasure for illegitimate destruction.

## Historical Context

---

Proverbs consistently portrays adultery as supreme folly, not just immorality. Wisdom literature emphasizes adultery's irrationality: it promises pleasure while delivering destruction, offers excitement while producing disaster. The question format invites readers to recognize adultery's absurdity rather than merely commanding abstinence.

## Related Passages

---

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

---

1. What makes sin appealing despite its irrationality and destructive consequences?
2. How can you strengthen appreciation for legitimate pleasures to reduce illegitimate temptations?
3. What rhetorical questions might you ask yourself to recognize folly before committing it?

## Interlinear Text

---

מִשְׁאָלָה וְלֹא מִתְּמַכֵּר בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּצִבְבָּרָה וְלֹא תִּמְכַבֵּד

H4100 be ravished H7686 And why wilt thou my son H1121 with a strange woman H2114 and embrace H2263

בְּרֵךְ בְּרֵךְ בְּרֵךְ בְּרֵךְ  
the bosom of a stranger H2436 H5237

## Additional Cross-References

---

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

**Proverbs 7:5** (Parallel theme): That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words.