

Proverbs 5:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a twoedged sword.

Analysis

The adulteress's end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. What began with honey-sweetness (v.3) ends in bitterness and death. The two-edged sword imagery emphasizes fatal consequences - sexual sin kills spiritually and often physically through disease, violence, and destruction of relationships. The contrast between initial pleasure and ultimate pain exposes sin's deceptive nature.

Historical Context

Part of extended warning against adultery (ch.5), one of wisdom literature's recurring themes. Ancient Near Eastern wisdom traditions also warned against sexual immorality, but Israel grounded this in covenant faithfulness to God.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What 'sweet' temptations are you pursuing that will end in bitterness if not resisted?

2. How does remembering sin's bitter end strengthen your resolve against present temptation?

Interlinear Text

וְאַחֲרֵיהָ	מַר הִיא	כְּלֶעָנָה	חַדָּה	כֶּחֶרֶב	פְּיוֹת:
But her end	is bitter	as wormwood	sharp	sword	as a twoedged
H319	H4751	H3939	H2299	H2719	H6310

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.

Psalms 57:4 (Word): My soul is among lions: and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.

Psalms 55:21 (Word): The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords.

Hebrews 4:12 (Word): For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Proverbs 9:18 (Parallel theme): But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell.