

Proverbs 7:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him.

Analysis

With much seductive speech she persuades him; with flattering lips she seduces. The Hebrew 'leqach' (persuasive speech/instruction) and 'chelqah' (flattery/smoothness) describe verbal seduction. Repetition emphasizes the point: smooth words seduce. Earlier verses described visual, sensory, circumstantial seduction; now comes verbal. Comprehensive assault on multiple fronts. Seduction is sophisticated, multi-dimensional attack on wisdom.

Historical Context

Proverbs repeatedly warns about smooth speech (2:16, 5:3, 6:24, 7:5, 7:21). Ancient rhetoric valued persuasive eloquence, but biblical wisdom distinguishes truth-telling from manipulation. The sophists whom Socrates opposed prioritized persuasion over truth. Biblical wisdom insists truth matters more than persuasiveness. Eloquent lies remain lies; simple truth remains truth.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What smooth speech or flattering words are currently persuading you toward compromise?
2. How can you evaluate message content independently of messenger's eloquence or charm?
3. What practices help you anchor in truth when persuasive rhetoric challenges biblical convictions?

Interlinear Text

הָ טָתַוּ	בְּרַב	לִקְוָה	בְּהַלָּק	שֶׁ פִּתְיָהּ
she caused him to yield	With her much	fair speech	with the flattering	of her lips
H5186	H7230	H3948	H2506	H8193

תִּדְּיוּ:

she forced

H5080

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 5:3 (Parallel theme): For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil:

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

2 Kings 4:8 (Parallel theme): And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread.

Psalms 12:2 (Parallel theme): They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak.

Luke 24:29 (Parallel theme): But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

