

## ***Proverbs 5*** ***(New International Version)***

**1**My son, pay attention to my wisdom,  
listen well to my words of insight,

**2**that you may maintain discretion  
and your lips may preserve knowledge.

**3**For the lips of an adulteress drip honey,  
and her speech is smoother than oil;

**4**but in the end she is bitter as gall,  
sharp as a double-edged sword.

**5**Her feet go down to death;  
her steps lead straight to the grave.<sup>a</sup>

**6**She gives no thought to the way of life;  
her paths are crooked, but she knows it not.

**7**Now then, my sons, listen to me;  
do not turn aside from what I say.

**8**Keep to a path far from her,  
do not go near the door of her house,

**9**lest you give your best strength to others  
and your years to one who is cruel,

**10**lest strangers feast on your wealth  
and your toil enrich another man's house.

**11**At the end of your life you will groan,  
when your flesh and body are spent.

**12**You will say, "How I hated discipline!"

How my heart spurned correction!

**13**I would not obey my teachers

or listen to my instructors.

**14**I have come to the brink of utter ruin

in the midst of the whole assembly. ♦

**15**Drink water from your own cistern,

running water from your own well.

**16**Should your springs overflow in the streets,

your streams of water in the public squares?

**17**Let them be yours alone,

never to be shared with strangers.

**18**May your fountain be blessed,

and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth.

**19**A loving doe, a graceful deer ♦

may her breasts satisfy you always,

may you ever be captivated by her love.

**20**Why be captivated, my son, by an adulteress?

Why embrace the bosom of another man ♦s wife?

**21**For a man ♦s ways are in full view of the Lord,

and he examines all his paths.

**22**The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him;

the cords of his sin hold him fast.

**23**He will die for lack of discipline,

led astray by his own great folly.

## Study Notes

### PROVERBS 5:3

This "immoral woman" is a prostitute. Proverbs includes many warnings against illicit sex for several reasons. First, a prostitute's charm is used as an example of any temptation to do wrong or to leave the pursuit of wisdom. Second, sexual immorality of any kind was and still is extremely dangerous. It destroys family life. It erodes a person's ability to love. It degrades human beings and turns them into objects. It can lead to disease. It can result in unwanted children. Third, sexual immorality is against God's law.

### PROVERBS 5:3-8

Any person should be on guard against those who use flattery and smooth talk (lips that "are sweet as honey") that would lead him or her into sin. The best advice is to take a detour and even avoid conversation with such people.

### PROVERBS 5:11-13

At the end of your life, it will be too late to ask for advice. When desire is fully activated, people don't want advice, they want satisfaction. The best time to learn the dangers and foolishness of going after forbidden sex (or anything else that is harmful) is long before the temptation comes. Resistance is easier if the decision has already been made. Don't wait to see what happens. Prepare for temptation by deciding *now* how you will act when you face it.

### PROVERBS 5:15

"Drink water from your own well" is a picture of faithfulness in marriage. It means to enjoy the spouse God has given you. In desert lands, water is precious, and a well is a family's most important possession. In Old Testament times, it was considered a crime to steal water from someone else's well, just as it was a crime to have intercourse with another man's wife. In both cases, the offender is endangering the health and security of family.

### PROVERBS 5:15-21

In contrast to much of what we read, see, and hear today, this passage urges couples to look to each other for lifelong satisfaction and companionship. Many temptations entice husbands and wives to leave their spouses when marriage becomes dull and find excitement and pleasures elsewhere. But God designed marriage and sanctified it, and only within this covenant relationship can we find real love and fulfillment. Don't let God's best for you be wasted on the illusion of greener pastures somewhere else. Instead, rejoice with your spouse as you give yourselves to God and to each other.

#### PROVERBS 5:18-20

God never intended marriage to become boring, lifeless, pleasureless, and dull. Sex is a gift God gives to married people for their mutual enjoyment. Real happiness comes when we decide to find pleasure in the spouse God has given us and to commit ourselves to meeting his or her needs. The real danger is in doubting that God knows and cares for us. We then may resent his timing and carelessly pursue sexual pleasure without his blessing.