

Introduction

Prov 30:20 King Lemuel, the Gentile King, Agrees with King Solomon ...

Madam Folly personifies a system which leads men and women along a path, a WAY, that leads to destruction, a loss of life's real quality, a loss of even physical life.

Most infidelity is not initiated by the woman, but rather by the man.

"I do not think Solomon intended for us to conclude that it is most often the woman that seduces the man. Rather, I believe Proverbs pictures Madam Folly as the aggressor because she personifies the evil way." *Deffinbaugh*

Satan seeks to draw men away from God into the evil way. The seducer in Proverbs is a woman because she, Madam Folly, personifies sin versus Lady Wisdom who personifies Righteousness: behavior and destiny.

Proverbs 5-7 The Seductress

7:1-5 Wisdom is like a woman who will protect you – like an older sister.

Ex: Miriam protects and watches over Moses in the Nile. Wisdom works in concert with God's providence.

Folly is found in the immoral woman. Seduction. Flattery. Sounds good. But leads to death.

Wisdom is something we gain and possess. Like sight. We protect our sight at all costs.

7:6-23 Our Story.

6-9 THE VICTIM: The teacher is watching. His POV in the story. Godlike. Sees all but is unseen by the actors below.

The simple. Young. No experience. Alone. Uncommitted. "See what happens."

10-12 THE HUNTER: Vast experience. Committed to a goal. A beautiful package. A wicked heart. The teacher "sees the heart".

13-21 THE TACTICS: 13 Shock and Awe! Affection!

14 "A special DAY!" Celebrate!

15-18 She flatters and promises sensual thrills – passion. It is an assault on the imagination and the senses. The senses affect the heart. But she must sense some hesitation, though the fire of lust has been lit.

19-20 The nudge. "We are safe! My husband is gone on a long journey."

21 "MANY persuasions ..." All things work together for ... EVIL."

The THOUGHT that NEVER occurs to the SIMPLE:

Betraying her own husband is treachery: Her character!

His heart is on fire with lust! His mind is in STUPOR!

Hubbard

22-23 THE DEADLY DECISION: "All at ONCE!" "It is safe – no one will know! I can DO This!" He does not see the treachery or the danger! He only pictures the thrill and the sensual release!

There is a neat verb progression here: He Goes (walks) – He Comes – He Hurries!
The OX (guided) The Stag (Roaming) The Bird (Flies)
ESV/RSV/NIV all better **ESV** “or as a stag is caught fast till an arrow pierces its liver;” better than **NASB/KJV** Stag and Fool same root. Stag better fits with 23
“Arrow to the liver” **LXX** supports translation of the **ESV/RSV/NIV**

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24-27 THE WARNING: Our culture says “Be Free! You will not die!”

But sexual “freedom” is the **culture of death:**

STDs, Violence, Murder, Abortion, Suicide.

David the great King – brought death into his **house**.

Solomon. The wisest of all the rulers of Israel, brought death into his **nation**.

Both gave in to lust. It made fools of them both.

Derek Kidner

The Consequences CHOICE DETERMINES LIFE

5:1-6 THE SEDUCTION: We find an “ARC” here, a Theme for this section that starts in 5:1-6 and ends in 7:24-27, where we just read. Within this “arc” there is more than just sexual folly. There are other things that “seduce” us. But we will only focus on one topic.

4 Her “end” The end of the path you have chosen – What looked so exciting and fulfilling ends in death (separation and loss)

5:7-14 THE AGONY OF ADULTERY: The Crushing Regret – a mental burden.

LOSS!! Loss of honor – Time – Wealth – Children’s Inheritance – Reputation –

Condemned by your own conscience, publicly condemned by others.

Blackmailed, harassed by the wronged husband.

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More true in **their** Mideast culture. Not so much in ours today. Bruce Waltke makes the point that “In our world, we are losing our sense of shame about these things.”

I have to agree. What was covered up 50 years ago as shameful is now in the open. Vulgarity, even coming out of our governing institutions, is being “normalized.”

5:15-23 THE ECSTASY OF FIDELITY: Fidelity is not “loss of freedom”

15-19 Fidelity is a fresh water fountain of blessing. This “water” is the marital union. It is yours, exclusive, private. You do NOT share your wife with others! This FRESH FLOWING Water has no end, no limit, no bounds, in terms of influence and blessing on the children of a faithful and enduring union. **From homes of high character come children of high character.**

The family is the foundation of culture, the “school of wisdom and discipline.”

20-23 Promiscuity and adultery lead to a waste of all that is good.

The teacher asks: Why waste your ecstasy on an adulteress?

It is losing all control of your very life!

SHA-GAH

This word shagah ties all of this together. It calls for closer examination.

THE DANGERS ARE REAL

6:20-26 LOSS OF WEALTH – LOSS OF LIFE Is it possible to commit adultery without ANY consequences? MAYBE – But NOT Likely!
Can the LORD forgive adultery? YES! Can the LORD lessen the consequences of adultery? YES!

But will HE? He controls the consequences. WE Control the CHOICES!!!

26 The father warns there is always a cost! Even with a prostitute. But adultery is even MORE dangerous!

6:27-29 IS FIRE DANGEROUS? Not always. Depends on how it is used.
But can you do this? Burns clothes (material loss) Permanent scars (irreversible lasting effects).
Sexual immorality is fire. It will cost you materially, it will “mark you”.

6:30-35 SYMPATHY AND CONTEMPT: The teacher compares the thief to the adulterer. Stealing is bad, but there is sympathy for the hungry man. But even he must repay! LOSS! But there is an end point, even though a large amount.
But the adulterer! CONTEMPT!! Sex is not food! There is no end to what can happen to the adulterer. It may cost his life! Killed by a jealous husband.

How ought we in the church deal with adultery?

Urge repentance. Stop the relationship. Then forgiveness. Healing of the relationships involved. Takes time and determined commitment, both on the part of the one needing restoration and the one helping to restore.

The church is never to condone, or “look away” from adultery. If not dealt with, it destroys the character of the church, in the same way it destroys the character of a home.

As far as society, we are not the judges of the culture. Immorality is sin we claim can be forgiven by the Cross of Christ. That is the light we hold forth! I am afraid we in the US church today are seen as vindictive judges of “all that wrong with our country”. We are losing our credibility as “people who forgive because Christ forgave us.” We desperately need wisdom in the church today. Without it we are scattered sheep, open to be corrupted by evil men.

Next week we will look more closely at Lady Wisdom. Chapter 8.

We will compare the life she offers with the “life” Dame folly offers.

Lady Wisdom speaks truth. Truth is life. Truth is hard for the simple and the fool to grasp.

Dame Folly flatters. Her promises are lies. The simple and the fool choose to believe them. They seem to be the “easier way”