

# ADULTERY

*"Can a man take fire into his bosom, and his clothes not get burned?" (6:27)*

**INTRODUCTION**—Much of the book of Proverbs is devoted to warnings against sexual sins. Verse for verse, more consideration is given to this subject than is found in any other book. Obviously, the great sage perceived in the seductress, the greatest hazard to young, unsuspecting male victims.

Wisdom calls the simple to the way of **life** (9:1-12), whereas the adulteress calls the simple to the way of **death** (9:13-18). Understanding her evil ways can safeguard young men from destruction (2:10-22; esp. vv.16-19). Adultery is a fatal, self-inflicted wound (6:32).

## I. INSTRUCTIONS ABOUT ADULTERY

- A. The Deception of Adultery (5:1-6). It is full of empty promises. It promises pleasure, love, and fulfillment, but in the end gives pain, suffering, and destruction.
  1. Her art of seduction—she uses flattering words (5:3; 6:24; 7:14-21) and sex appeal (6:25).
  2. Things she delivers—bitterness (5:4), destruction (5:5) and instability (5:6).
- B. The Price of Adultery (5:7-14). Adulterous love appears to be free, but it has its price which is more than we bargained for (cf. Galatians 6:7-8).
  1. Lose one's honor and dignity (5:9).
  2. Sacrifices all the years of one's labor (5:10; 29:3). Everything is cut off from him but her—a woman who is devoid of real love.
  3. Body consumed with disease (5:11). Husband and wife do not transmit such venereal diseases when they are faithful to one another.
  4. Filled with remorse after it is too late (5:12-13).
  5. Total ruin (5:14). Disgrace, humiliation, and even death.
- C. The Deterrent to Adultery (5:15-20). A happy and honorable marriage (cf. Hebrews 13:4). The adulteress has no charm when a man is spell-bound with his wife's love.
  1. Look for love at home (5:15). Adultery and sensual passions are counterfeits (5:16-18).
  2. Fall in love again with your spouse (5:19-20; Song of Solomon 4:9-16). Make sure that love relationship cannot be improved on.
- D. The Price of Adultery (6:20-35). The 'no-strings-attached' love he was offered proves to have 'great chains' with heavy burdens.
  1. Reduced to poverty and emptiness (6:26).
  2. He is burned (6:27-29). A burn brings injury, leaves permanent scars and continual pain—so does adultery.
  3. Irremovable reproach (6:33). The stigma of 'wife-stealer' or 'home-wrecker' cannot be erased.
  4. The fury of a jealous husband (6:30-35).
- E. The Enticements of an Adulteress (7:6-23). She is crafty and manipulative. Beware of her temptations.
  1. She appeals to men with her attire (7:10).
  2. She is restless, looking for excitement (7:11).
  3. She is forward (7:12-13).
  4. She flatters him because **she** came looking for **him** (7:14-15).
  5. She has set the mood for their love feast (7:16-18).
  6. Her husband is gone (7:19-20).

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7. She enticed him through flattery (7:21-23).

F. The Warning (7:24-27). As beautiful and appealing as she may be, her house is a battlefield, strewn with the corpses of many strong men, and her door is a gate to hell!!

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS—

- 1) *What are some factors which contribute to adultery's great temptation?*
- 2) *Adultery sounds like fun, but what are some of the consequences of sexual immorality?*
- 3) *Why is "playing with fire" (6:27-28) such an appropriate figure to describe adultery?*
- 4) *Many strong men have been slain by the adulteress (7:26-27). Can you think of any Bible examples?*
- 5) *Nothing can ruin a promising career so quickly as an illicit affair. Give some present day examples of such people.*
- 6) *What are the two great safeguards against adultery (5:8; 6:20-24)?*
- 7) *How can we overcome the temptation of adultery?*
  - 5:1-2—
  - 5:8—
  - 5:15-20—
  - 5:21-22—
  - 6:20-21—
  - 4:23—
- 8) *Can the guilt of adultery ever be hidden from God (5:21-23)?*
- 9) *In what sense is a harlot a "deep pit" (22:14; 23:27)?*
- 10) *What is one of the most amazing characteristics of an adulterous woman (30:20)?*
- 11) *Adultery is one of those cruel sins whose pain and destruction strikes twice. When will its consequences be experienced (5:7-14; 6:23-35; 7:24-27; Galatians 5:19-21)?*