

I. INTRODUCTION: A ROYAL WARNING BECOMES PERSONAL

- After addressing the nation in Proverbs 4, Solomon narrows his focus in Proverbs 5 back to one listener: the future king.
- This chapter is not general wisdom; it's urgent, personal instruction from a father-king to his heir.
- The warning is not about obvious wickedness but about the subtle, seductive pull of Torah abandonment.
- The strange woman represents more than sexual temptation—she is the personification of compromise, of covenant unfaithfulness disguised as opportunity.
- For a king, this temptation may look like political alliances, religious concessions, or pragmatic shortcuts that slowly erode Torah faithfulness.

II. A CALL TO ATTENTION (5:1-2)

- Solomon calls Rehoboam to deliberate attentiveness—"attend" and "bow thine ear."
- The language mirrors Proverbs 3:1, linking "wisdom" and "understanding" with "law" and "commandments."
- In Proverbs, wisdom = Torah. Understanding = faithful application.
- The blessings for attending to this wisdom are discretion and knowledge—essentials for a king.
- These virtues equip a ruler to discern deception and speak with authority rooted in God's Word.

III. THE WARNING AGAINST THE STRANGE WOMAN (5:3-14)

A. THE SEDUCTION OF THE STRANGE WOMAN (5:3-6)

- Her speech is smooth and sweet, but her end is bitter and deadly.
- She presents rebellion as attractive and harmless, but her path leads to death.
- Her ways are unstable—she draws others off the path without revealing her destination.
- This is not a surface-level morality tale—it's a symbolic warning against the drift from Torah under the guise of practicality or appeal.

B. THE CONSEQUENCES OF SUCCUMBING (5:7-14)

- Solomon pleads with both his son and the nation: stay far from her—don't even approach her house.
- Falling for her costs everything: honor (v. 9), time (v. 9), wealth (v. 10), strength (v. 11).
- The regret comes too late, when instruction has already been despised (vv. 12–13).
- The fall is public and humiliating—a king becomes a national disgrace (v. 14).
- This is what happens when wisdom is exchanged for flattery.

IV. THE CALL TO TORAH FAITHFULNESS (5:15–18A)

- Solomon shifts from warning to exhortation—what should the king do instead?
- The cistern and fountains symbolize Torah as the God-given source of life and wisdom.
- Verse 16 is best read as a positive instruction: let Torah waters flow—but don't forget they are yours (v. 17).
- Many translations, following the Septuagint, turn verse 16 into a rhetorical negative based on assuming the cistern represents the wife—but that metaphor doesn't arrive until v. 18.
- This reading aligns with passages like Jeremiah 2:13, where forsaking God's fountain leads to ruin.
- The focus here is on spreading Torah wisdom faithfully while maintaining exclusive loyalty to it.

V. MARRIAGE AS A PICTURE OF COVENANT FAITHFULNESS (5:18B–19)

- In verse 18b, Solomon shifts to marital imagery: “rejoice with the wife of thy youth.”
- The surface level teaches marital faithfulness, but the deeper message is about covenant loyalty to God.
- In the biblical framework, marriage illustrates Israel’s relationship with God (Isaiah 54:5; Jeremiah 3:14; Hosea 2:2).
- The king is called to cherish Torah with the same intimacy and delight as a man delights in his beloved wife.
- The passionate imagery reflects how a ruler should cling to covenant wisdom—not coldly, but fervently.

VI. THE CONSEQUENCES OF TORAH ABANDONMENT (5:20–23)

A. A FINAL PLEA FOR CLARITY (V. 20)

- Solomon confronts his son with a rhetorical challenge: why embrace the stranger over the covenant?
- The word “ravished” (הָאָשָׁף, SHAGAH) implies intoxication—this is not rational error, but reckless surrender to deception.
- The contrast with the wife of his youth is deliberate: will he cling to Torah or chase the illusion?

B. NOTHING IS HIDDEN FROM GOD (V. 21)

- All the king’s paths are before God—there are no secrets, no private compromises.
- God not only sees the way but weighs it—every step is measured.

C. THE TRAP SPRINGS SHUT (VV. 22–23)

- The king is not destroyed by enemies but ensnared by his own sin (v. 22).
- He dies without instruction, having rejected counsel when it mattered most (v. 23).
- His reign ends in darkness, wandering, and regret—a tragic end for one who had access to Torah but chose flattery instead.

VII. HISTORICAL CONFIRMATION: JUDAH’S KINGS DIDN’T LISTEN

- This proverb is not hypothetical—it’s prophetic.
- Rehoboam ignored sound counsel and lost ten tribes (1 Kings 12).
- Generations of kings followed his example—flirting with idolatry, foreign entanglements, and Torah neglect.
- The result? Everything Proverbs 5 warned about came true:
 - Honor lost (v. 9) as Judah became a mocked vassal state.
 - Years wasted on cruelty (v. 9) under kings like Manasseh.
 - Wealth handed to strangers (v. 10) as Babylon looted the temple.
 - Strength drained (v. 11) as the Davidic dynasty collapsed.
 - Regret came too late (vv. 12–13), and disgrace was public (v. 14).
- The fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC was not a surprise—it was the natural end of a long, slow rejection of Torah.

VIII. FINAL TAKEAWAY: A KING’S LIFE HANGS ON WISDOM

- Torah is not optional for the king—it is his lifeline.
- Sin is not a misstep—it’s a snare that binds and kills.
- This chapter is not just a father’s advice—it is the inspired blueprint for covenant kingship.
- The king who clings to wisdom will reign in strength.

- The one who trades it for flattery and self-indulgence? He dies as he lived—without instruction, without wisdom, and without hope.