

## Day 366 - MONDAY: February 12<sup>th</sup>

### Proverbs 2

#### Proverbs 2:1-22 NKJV

My son, if you receive my words, And treasure my commands within you, So that you incline your ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to understanding; Yes, if you cry out for discernment, And lift up your voice for understanding, If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, And find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding; He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly; He guards the paths of justice, And preserves the way of His saints. Then you will understand righteousness and justice, Equity and every good path. When wisdom enters your heart, And knowledge is pleasant to your soul, Discretion will preserve you; Understanding will keep you, To deliver you from the way of evil, From the man who speaks perverse things, From those who leave the paths of uprightness To walk in the ways of darkness; Who rejoice in doing evil, And delight in the perversity of the wicked; Whose ways are crooked, And who are devious in their paths; To deliver you from the immoral woman, From the seductress who flatters with her words, Who forsakes the companion of her youth, And forgets the covenant of her God. For her house leads down to death, And her paths to the dead; None who go to her return, Nor do they regain the paths of life— So you may walk in the way of goodness, And keep to the paths of righteousness. For the upright will dwell in the land, And the blameless will remain in it; But the wicked will

be cut off from the earth, And the unfaithful will be uprooted from it.

### **Daily Deep Dive:**

The UCG reading program states: “Whereas the wicked sought through evil means to be enriched by the precious possessions of others in the previous chapter (Proverbs 1:13), it is here in the second exhortation (Proverbs 2:1-22) stated that God’s commands, wisdom and proper understanding constitute the treasures the son should be seeking (verses 1-7; compare Proverbs 3:13-15; Proverbs 8:10-11). As one would mine for silver, so the son—so we—must dig, in a sense, exerting effort to uncover the wonderful hidden treasures that God has laid in store (Proverbs 2:4-7). The focus here is on coming to properly fear God and choosing to follow his ways. The choice before the son, the choice before all of us, is presented as two paths of life. The “paths of justice,” by which God’s saints are preserved through wisdom (verses 8-11), stand in stark contrast to the crooked and devious “ways of darkness” (verses 12-15).

The need for deliverance from the way of evil is illustrated by the immoral woman (verses 16-22). “As the father instructs his son in the first nine chapters, there is really one teaching that prevails: avoid immoral women. Proverbs 2:16-22; Proverbs 3:13-18; Proverbs 4:4-9; Proverbs 6:20-35, and the entirety of chapters 5 and 7 are occupied with this theme. The father pulls out all of his stops to bombard his son with this warning. After all, as he points out to his son, the consequences of this foolish act are dire. After this major emphasis, it is a bit surprising, perhaps, to see how little attention is given to the subject in the second part of the book

(only Proverbs 22:14; Proverbs 23:26-28; Proverbs 31:2). Indeed, the relevant proverbs simply reinforce the teaching of the discourses in the first part of the book. Who are these women that young men are told to avoid? There are two types: the prostitute and the promiscuous wife. These women, in Hebrew, are referred to as “strange” (*zara*, translated [in Proverbs 2:16 as] 'immoral woman' in [the NKJV and] NLT [New Living Translation, 2002]) and ‘foreign’ (*nokriyya*; translated [in the same verse as ‘seductress’ in the NKJV and] ‘promiscuous woman’ in NLT). They are strange and foreign because they act outside the bounds of law and social convention, seeking sexual liaisons outside of marriage” (Tremper Longman III, *How to Read Proverbs*, p. 133). Indeed, this should have been more characteristic of women of foreign nations—not God’s people. While we are to understand the immoral woman literally on one level, we should also realize a figurative representation here. We have already seen wisdom portrayed as a woman—and folly is later represented as a woman too. The immoral woman can be seen to represent the faithless way of foolishness and evil generally. Again, there is a choice to be made between two paths—between two ways of life—the right one leading to life and ultimately an eternal inheritance in God’s Kingdom and the wrong one leading to suffering and death.” [END]

Verse 12 – Here it says “To deliver...from the man who speaks perverse things.” The Hebrew here for perverse comes from a root word meaning “to turn over” and by implication means “to change, to overturn, to pervert”. There are people who are always trying to teach others to cast of restraint, go away from God’s law, teach mistruths and it’s through looking to God, His

Word and growing in knowledge, understand and wisdom, protects and keeps us from getting caught up in false teachings.

Verse 16 – As mentioned in the UCG reading above, here we find two words used for this woman. In the Hebrew it's "zur" and "nokriy".

Both "zur" and "nokriy" are almost always translated as "strange or stranger".

Biblicially, "Zur" is used for the "strange" fire or incense that some would burn before God (compare Exodus 30:9 & Leviticus 10:1), or of "strangers" outside the nation of Israel (who do not obey God) (compare Exodus 29:33 & Leviticus 22:10). It is also used in Deutoronomy 32:16 of "strange" gods and that God would become jealous if Israel went after these strange gods. Ezekiel 16:32 uses this same word for a wife that commits adultery and takes a "stranger" instead of her husband.

Biblically, "nokriy" is used for "strange" nations (Exodus 21:8), a "stranger" from one of these nations (Deutoronomy 17:15). But it's also often used for women or wives who are not of the nation of Israel and therefore worshiped and followed other gods. It's used for the "strange" (foreign) women that Solomon loved (1 Kings 11:1 & 11:8, Nehemiah 13:26, 13:27) and for Israel men marrying foreign ("strange" women (compare Ezra 10:2, 10:10, 10:11, 10:14, 10:17, 10:18, 10:44).

The point I want to bring out here, is that "strange" women is used throughout the Bible as a type of false worship and committing adultery against God. Here in the book of Proverbs, not only is the warning against physical adultery and the allure of "strange" women, but the warning throughout the Bible is the warning to avoid being enticed to commit adultery against God by

participating in false worship. It's why we avoid any pagan worship practices as a part of worshiping the True God. Solomon would both marry "strange" (foreign) women, but they would also lead him to committing adultery on God by worshiping "strange" gods. It's why God's command throughout the Bible is to pursue and marry within the faith so we are not led away from True Worship and enticed to compromise in worshiping false gods or participating in pagan worship practices. We will see this theme continue and develop through many of the books of the minor and major prophets in the Bible.