

## TEXT — 7:1-12

1. My son, keep my words,  
And lay up my commandments with thee.
2. Keep my commandments and live;  
And my law as the apple of thine eye.
3. Bind them upon thy fingers;  
Write them upon the tablet of thy heart.
4. Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister;  
And call understanding thy kinswoman;
5. That they may keep thee from the strange woman,  
From the foreigner that flattereth with her words.
6. For at the window of my house  
I looked forth through my lattice;
7. And I beheld among the simple ones,  
I discerned among the youths,  
A young man void of understanding,
8. Passing through the street near her corner;  
And he went the way to her house,
9. In the twilight, in the evening of the day,  
In the middle of the night and in the darkness.
10. And, behold, there met him a woman  
With the attire of a harlot, and wily of heart.
11. (She is clamorous and wilful;  
Her feet abide not in her house:
12. Now she is in the streets, now in the broad places,  
And lieth in wait at every corner.)

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 7:1-12

1. Contrast the child who regards his parents' teachings with one who does not (v. 1).
2. What is the "apple" of the eye (v. 2)?
3. Why is "heart" used for "mind" so many times in the Bible (v. 3)?
4. Why are graces and virtues often misrepresented in sculpturing, art, and literature as women (v. 4)?
5. Yet v. 5 shows that women may be ..... as well as virtuous.
6. Describe such a window of their times as is suggested in v. 6.
7. Are we all "simple" when young (v. 7)?

8. What verse in Proverbs says to stay completely away from her (v. 8)?
9. What does the Bible say about sinning and "darkness" (v. 9)?
10. Why is her heart described as "wily" (v. 10)?
11. Why is she also described as "clamorous" (v. 11)?
12. What were their "broad places" (v. 12)?

### PARAPHRASE OF 7:1-12

- 1-5. Follow my advice, my son; always keep it in mind and stick to it. Obey me and live! Guard my words as your most precious possession. Write them down, and also keep them deep within your heart. Love wisdom like a sweetheart; make her a beloved member of your family. Let her hold you back from visiting a prostitute, from listening to her flattery.
- 6-12. I was looking out the window of my house one day, and saw a simple-minded lad, a young man lacking common sense, walking at twilight down the street to the house of this wayward girl, a prostitute. She approached him, saucy and pert, and dressed seductively. She was the brash, coarse type, seen often in the streets and markets, soliciting at every corner for men to be her lovers.

### COMMENTS ON 7:1-12

V. 1. Before the father begins this lengthy warning against his son's getting involved with a wicked woman, he urges him to be obedient to what he is teaching him. Why does the father go over and over this warning in Proverbs? Because he is "training up" his son in the way that he should go the promise for which is, "He will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6).

V. 2. The "apple" of the eye is the pupil of the eye ("Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary"). To keep something "as the apple of thine eye" was a proverbial expression for anything particularly precious and liable to be injured unless guarded with scrupulous care" ("Pulpit Commentary"). The expression is used also in Deut. 32:10; Psa. 17:8; Zech. 2:8. What does one guard or keep any more than his eye? The father's promise was that if his son would keep his commandments as he would his eye, he would "live" and not be cut off from the living as a wicked

person (Psa. 37:1,2).

V. 3. "Bind" means to "tie". The thought of his binding his father's instructions upon his fingers seems similar to our talk of "tying a string on our finger" when we don't want to forget something. The heart is here spoken of as a "tablet", a writing surface. And indeed the heart is a place to lay up things precious and dear: Mary did so concerning many things said about her son Jesus and said by Him (Luke 2:19; Luke 2:51); we are told to write God's Word upon our hearts (Heb. 8:10; Psa. 119:11).

V. 4. Claim a close relationship with those women "Wisdom" and "Understanding", and such relationship will keep one from any relationship with the wicked, immoral woman about to be discussed (beginning in the next verse--v. 5). Note that the young man who got involved with her did not make "Understanding" his close relative, for v. 7 says he was "void of understanding". From antiquity many virtues have been portrayed in sculpturing, art, and literature as women. It does seem that many virtues can reach their highest pinnacle in womanhood or if lacking can be sacrificed the most my womanhood.

V. 5. "Keep my words," says the father in v. 1, "that they may keep thee from the strange woman" (this verse). "Pulpit Commentary" aptly observes: "When the heart is filled with the love of what is good, it is armed against the seductions of evil pleasure or whatever may entice the soul from God and duty." Prov. 2:16 and Prov. 6:24 also speak of being kept from the evil woman--she is someone to avoid!

V. 6. "To show the greatness of the danger presented by the seductions of the temptress, the writer introduces...an actual example of what had passed before his own eyes" ("Pulpit Commentary"). Lattice-work was used over windows and other areas by crossing laths over each other for privacy (so one could look out without being seen), to keep the welcome flow of breeze coming in while keeping the hot rays of the sun out, and for decorative purposes. It was through such that the father had looked out upon the sad spectacle that he mentions.

V. 7. "The 'simple' are the inexperienced, who are easily led astray" ("Pulpit Commentary"). Other passages connecting the "simple" and those "void of understanding" with immorality: "He that commiteth adultery with a woman is void of

understanding" (Prov. 6:<sup>32</sup>28); "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: As for him that is void of understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat ye of my bread, And drink of the wine which I have mingled. Leave off, ye simple ones, and live; And walk in the way of understanding" (Prov. 9:4-6); "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither; And as for him that is void of understanding, she saith to him, Stolen waters are sweet" (Prov. 9:16,17). This verse shows that what one does is known and read by others.

V. 8. He wasn't aware of how dangerous it was to him to be found in her area. This verse sounds like he purposely went to her house with the idea of immorality, but the pressure she put on him (beginning in v. 13) does not bear this out.

V. 9. Wickedness seems to "come to life" when darkness begins to set in: "The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, Saying, No eye shall see me" (Job 24:15); "They that are drunken are drunken in the night" (I Thess. 5:7). The devil's dens of iniquity are all open at night.

V. 10. "Her attire catches the eye at once and identifies her--compare Gen. 38:14. In Rev. 17:4 the harlot is arrayed in purple and scarlet and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls; and in the present case the female is dressed in some conspicuous garments, very different from the sober clothing of the pure and modest" ("Pulpit Commentary"). "Wily" means "subtle". She cannot be believed: her "lures" are in reality all "lies"!

V. 11. Prov. 9:13 also mentions her being "clamorous", meaning loud and boisterous--something that a good woman is not (I Pet. 3:4). This is why she is so forward. Being "wilful" means she is stubborn and disobedient. "Ungovernable...In Hos. 4:16...the same word is used of a wild heifer that will not submit its neck to the yoke" ("Lange"). She does not stay in the house, for she is out working her dirty trade.

V. 12. She knows no shame. She goes out where people are to snare men.

### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 7:1-12

1. Why does the father go over and over this warning in Proverbs (v. 1)?
2. On what basis does the father promise "life" to his son in v. 2?
3. What expression do we have that sounds like v. 3?

4. Who made a "tablet" out of her heart (v. 3)?
5. What relationship should the son develop (v. 4)?
6. What relationship should he avoid (v. 4)?
7. Keeping his father's words should keep the son from ..... (v. 5).
8. Why does the father introduce an actual example beginning in v. 6?
9. What other passages connect a lack of understanding with committing immoral acts (v. 7)?
10. Interpret the simple youth's being in her area (v. 8).
11. What about wickedness and night (v. 9)?
12. How did a harlot dress (v. 10)?
13. Comment on her being "wilful" (v. 11).
14. Why is she out in the streets and broad places (v. 12)?

## TEXT — 7:13-27

13. So she caught him, and kissed him,  
And with an impudent face she said unto him:
14. Sacrifices of peace-offerings are with me;  
This day have I paid my vows.
15. Therefore came I forth to meet thee,  
Diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee.
16. I have spread my couch with carpets of tapestry,  
With striped cloths of the yarn of Egypt.
17. I have perfumed by bed  
With myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.
18. Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning;  
Let us solace ourselves with loves.
19. For the man is not at home;  
He is gone a long journey:
20. He hath taken a bag of money with him;  
He will come home at the full moon.
21. With her much fair speech she causeth him to yield,  
With the flattering of her lips she forceth him along.
22. He goeth after her straightway,  
As an ox goeth to the slaughter,  
Or as one in fetters to the correction of the fool;
23. Till an arrow strike through his liver;  
As a bird hasteth to the snare,  
And knoweth not that it is for his life.
24. Now therefore, my sons, hearken unto me,

- And attend to the words of my mouth.
25. Let not thy heart decline to her ways;  
Go not astray in her paths.
  26. For she hath cast down many wounded:  
Yea, all her slain are a mighty host.
  27. Her house is the way to Sheol,  
Going down to the chambers of death.

## STUDY QUESTIONS OVER 7:13-27

1. Why is face described as "impudent" (v. 13)?
2. What is v. 14's connection with the subject under consideration (v. 14)?
3. Was she really looking for him personally (v. 15)?
4. Why all of this (v. 16)?
5. Would we put cinnamon in our beds (v. 17)?
6. What young man in the Bible successfully resisted such talk (v. 18)?
7. Was she, then, a married woman (v. 19)?
8. Why tell him what she did in v. 20?
9. Does the fact that he did not give in easily indicate that he knew it was wrong (v. 21)?
10. Was this his view at the moment (v. 22)?
11. When would this have been (v. 23)?
12. Would the father's words help the young man resist such (v. 24)?
13. The act of sin is preceded by the ..... to sin (v. 25).
14. Was he the first to fall for her talk and to suffer the consequences (v. 26)?
15. What does sin lead to (v. 27)?

## PARAPHRASE OF 7:13-27

- 13-20. She put her arms around him and kissed him, and with a saucy look she said, "I've decided to forget our quarrel! I was just coming to look for you and here you are! My bed is spread with lovely, colored sheets of finest linen imported from Egypt, perfumed with myrrh, aloes and cinnamon. Come on, let's take our fill of love until morning, for my husband is away on a long trip. He has taken a wallet full of money with him, and won't return for several days."
- 21-23. So she seduced him with her pretty speech, her

coaxing and her wheedling, until he yielded to her. He couldn't resist her flattery. He followed her as an ox going to the butcher, or as a stag that is trapped, waiting to be killed with an arrow through its heart. He was as a bird flying into a snare, not knowing the fate awaiting it there.

- 24-27. Listen to me, young men, and not only listen but obey. Don't let your desires get out of hand; don't let yourself think about her; don't go near her; stay away from where she walks, lest she tempt you and seduce you. For she has been the ruin of multitudes--a vast host of men have been her victims. If you want to find the road to hell, look for her house.

#### COMMENTS ON 7:13-27

V. 13. Very reminiscent of Potiphar's wife: "She caught him by his garment saying, Lie with me" (Gen. 39:12). On "impudent face" the Hebrew indicates that "she strengthened her countenance, assumed the most confident look she could, endeavored to appear friendly and sincere" ("Clarke").

V. 14. When one had made a peace-offering to God, he (she) was allowed to take of portion of the meat home (Lev. 3:1-5). She was planning a delicious meal (a banquet for two) to which she invites the young man. "The religious nature of the feast is utterly ignored or forgotten. The shameless woman uses the opportunity simply as a convenience for her sin ("Pulpit Commentary").

V. 15. Here is an instance of "flattery" that is so characteristic of her and which is warned against several times: "That flattereth with her words" (Prov. 2:16); "To keep thee from the evil woman, From the flattery" (6:24). Notice that "flattery" is always connected with the early part of each instance--with the alluring phase of her operation.

V. 16. Wicked women have employed every means involving beauty, fragrance, etc., beautifying themselves, their clothing, and their quarters to entice men. Bait for the trap!

V. 17. And here comes the fragrance!

V. 18. All of this is to get him to "come". Dealing with the Hebrew, "Clarke" says, "Let us revel in the breasts," for the first statement; for the second: "Let us gratify each other with loves, with the utmost delights." And then he remarks: "This

does not half express the original, but I forbear...The original itself is too gross to be literally translated, but quite in character as coming from the mouth of an abandoned woman."

V. 19. She takes care of any fear that he might have of her "husband". The young man would realize that "Jealousy is the rage of a man; And he will not spare in the day of vengeance. He will not regard any ransom; Neither will he rest content though thou givest many gifts" (Prov. 6:34,35). But she begins assuring him that her husband will know nothing about the matter: he is "not at home"; he has gone on a "long journey".

V. 20. The assurances continue: he has plenty of "money" with him for his long trip (probably a merchandising trip); he will not be home again until the "full moon". Sinners always have everything taken care of, they think, but have you not noticed that they still get caught every so often? The trouble is, they think no further than not getting caught by people. But all the while God is watching and on judgment will open the book of each person's life and judge him (or her) out of those books according to one's works (Rev. 20:12).

V. 21. What about her flattery of him? What about her tapestried couch? What about her perfumed bed? What about her assurances that it was safe? All this caused him to "yield". "The lips of a strange woman drop honey, And her mouth is smoother than oil" (Prov. 5:3). The young man evidently didn't give in easily, knowing it would be wrong. But how many times temptation wins over knowledge! "Clarke" observes, "With her blandishments and lascivious talk, she overcame all his scruples and constrained him to yield." This would appear to be the first time he had yielded to this temptation--but it would it be the last time? But he isn't the only one: "She hath cast down many wounded" (v. 26).

V. 22. Once a person has given in inwardly, there is nothing to keep him from proceeding to the evil act itself: "He goeth after her straightway". But how does he go? He sees himself as one on the verge of satisfying his curiosity concerning what happens in sex, of one who is about to experience life's greatest thrill in an exciting setting. The pleasure, not the punishment, of sin is uppermost in his mind at the moment. But in reality he is going as an "ox goeth to the slaughter" ("Her house inclineth unto death, And her paths unto the dead" (Prov. 2:18); "Her mouth is smoother than oil: But in the end



she is bitter as wormwood, Sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death; Her steps take hold on Sheol" (Prov. 5:3-5); "He knoweth not that the dead are there; That her guests are in the depths of Sheol" (Prov. 9:18). Our verse also indicates that he is in for a "beating", for he goes after her "as one in fetters to the correction of the fool".

V. 23. Other figures of suffering and death continue: an arrow through the liver, a bird caught in a trap. With all the promises that sin makes and with what actually follows, no wonder Heb. 3:13 speaks of the "deceitfulness" of sin, and the devil (who is behind every temptation) is proven to be the "liar" that Jesus said he was (John 8:44). The mess he is getting his life into, the shame that he will bear in honorable society, the trouble he will involve himself in with sinned-against husbands throughout the years, the danger he will bring to the stability of his own house, the disease he will encounter in his own body, the early death he will bring upon himself, and the eternal Hell in which he will suffer forever and ever are the real outcomes of such sin.

V. 24. Here Solomon speaks to all of his "sons". He wants all of them to listen to the urgent appeal he is about to make in the succeeding verses.

V. 25. Keep this type of thinking out of your "heart", and then you will not "go" after her. If you let your heart, it will decline to her ways and go in her paths. Only the strong teaching of parents can save young men from getting involved with such a woman sometime in life. Note the words "decline" (down) and "astray" (lost); to go that way is to go down and to lose one's way in life.

V. 26. One woman, but she has ruined many men; her slain are a mighty host; "The harlot...as a ruthless conqueror leaves a field of battle strewn with corpses" ("Pulpit Commentary"). If you do not realize the power that women can have over men, think of how this very thing overcame the strong man Samson (Judg. 16:1), how it was a pitfall for the great David on one occasion (II Sam. 11:2-4), and what Neh. 13:26 says about Solomon: "Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, and he was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did foreign women cause to sin." The author took nothing for granted as he warned his sons, and

today "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (I Cor. 10:12). So keep your eyes where they belong; keep your hands to yourself; don't flirt; don't think upon women; don't read about romance; don't be entertained by it.

V. 27. In deep-shaft coal mines there is a house built over the elevator. When one enters that house and gets on the elevator, it goes only one direction--down. And that's the way it is when one goes to the harlot's house. Other passages on this fact: Prov. 2:18; Prov. 5:5; Prov. 9:18.

### TEST QUESTIONS OVER 7:13-27

1. What shows the unfeminine forwardness of this woman (v. 13)?
2. Was her religion helping her conduct (v. 14)?
3. In this instance what won out over knowledge (v. 14)?
4. V. 15 is an instance of ..... warned against several times.
5. What "bait" does she throw at out in v. 16?
6. What "bait" in v. 17?
7. What does "Clarke" say about the Hebrew wording of v. 18?
8. What fear of his does she seek to allay in v. 19?
9. What additional assurance does she give in v. 20?
10. Did the young man survive her talk (v. 21)?
11. Was this probably his first time to be led into this sin (v. 21)?
12. Would it probably be his last (v. 21)?
13. Before he gave in outwardly, where did he give in (v. 22)?
14. What was uppermost in his mind at his moment of yielding (v. 22)?
15. His going after her is likened to what in v. 22?
16. To what in v. 23?
17. What word shows up in the plural in v. 24?
18. Comment on the words "decline" and "astray" in v. 25.
19. One woman, but ..... victims (v. 26).
20. Who were some men who fell before this sin (v. 26)?
21. Her house is the way to ..... (v. 27).