

# Strange Women

by David C. Grabbe  
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I am not opposed to women as a general rule. I have a wonderful wife, a very sweet mother, and even several sisters. Nevertheless, the Bible warns us about *strange women*, so it is in our best interest to develop a healthy suspicion of these women. They are described for us in Proverbs 7:

My son, keep my words, and treasure my commands within you. Keep my commands and live, and my law as the apple of your eye. Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart. Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," and call understanding your nearest kin, that they may keep you from the immoral [*strange*, KJV] woman, from the seductress who flatters with her words. (verses 1-5)

Verse 5 introduces the main symbol in this chapter, the "strange woman," as the King James Version calls her. Other translations refer to this immoral woman as a "seductress," "adulteress," "wayward wife," "loose woman," "adventuress," or "foreigner."

The word translated "strange" indicates a deficient quality in a relationship. It represents something that is lacking or incomplete in comparison to an ideal or a standard. This woman was not living up to the standard or ideal of a godly wife, and so the Bible brands her as *strange*.

In our own lives, if we do not recognize somebody, we say that person is a *stranger*. The same principle is at work here—God does not recognize this woman because she does not live by the standards that He has established for women in general, and specifically for a wife.

In this chapter, Solomon shows the danger of being led astray by someone who does not live up to the godly ideal. While this certainly applies in the case of a sexually immoral person, as is illustrated here, another danger, another application of this, encompasses a great deal more than just sexual immorality.

## Two Strange Women

The book of Revelation provides two examples of strange women—women whom God does not recognize, and who do not live up to the standards that He has set for us. Both of these also have the symbolism of a sexually immoral woman:

Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication." So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. I saw the woman,

drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement. (Revelation 17:1-6)

This first example of an immoral woman is, in the words of the King James version, the "great whore." She represents a powerful false religious system—specifically, false Christianity. We will call her "Miss Heresy."

A second example of something strange to God follows closely on this woman's heels, and again, the symbol of sin is sexual immorality:

After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a habitation of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury." And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities." (Revelation 18:1-5)

This second example of the strange, immoral woman is *Babylon the great*, a worldwide system of government, trade, and entertainment representing the world's way of life at the end time. The voice from heaven commands Christians to come out from Babylon spiritually. Coming out is an inner transformation, a change or conversion, from what Babylon represents to something that is far better—something that God recognizes. We will call this strange woman "Miss Babylon."

Consider again Solomon's warning as it applies to these "strange women": "My son, keep my words, and treasure my commands within you. Keep my commands and live, and my law as the apple of your eye. Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart" (Proverbs 7:1-3).

This is the basic formula we must use to avoid being led astray by strange women, whether a real person, or by the symbolic Miss Babylon and Miss Heresy. God's first instruction is to keep His words and to "lay up" His commandments, meaning to *treasure* the instructions He has given to us. He reiterates this in verse 2 with the charge to keep His commandments and make His law the apple of our eye—that is, what we always keep before us and consider valuable.

This applies perfectly to rejecting the two women of Revelation 17 and 18. Miss Heresy has all manner of ways of getting around the laws of God. Catholics try to replace God's law with their own traditions and ordinances. Protestants try to do away with God's law by saying Christ has fulfilled it, and now all we need to do is "believe."

Miss Babylon is also diametrically opposed to God's law, in both the letter and the spirit. By obeying God's instructions in their direct application as well as their intent, we will be rejected by this world and culture for being "strange"—because they do not recognize the way we think or act. It is the way that we live our lives, based on God's clear instruction, that will separate us from the world.

Next month, we will see more ways to avoid these wicked sisters, Miss Heresy and Miss Babylon.