

Mishlei 02-01**The Price of Wisdom**

[Pesukim 2:1 thru 2:4]

Key Concepts

Mishlei now speaks to the reader as a loving Rebbi who encourages his *talmid* (student) to make the sacrifices necessary to acquire the wisdom of the Torah. He has already suggested that there is a great reward for doing so. (See segment 01-07.) But before elaborating on the infinite benefits of wisdom, Mishlei wants his *talmid* to realize what he will be getting into.

Exploring Mishlei

The four pesukim of this segment (2:1 through 2:4) present five requirements of what will be necessary for the *talmid* to acquire wisdom.

1. To acquire wisdom a person must listen carefully to the Torah that his teacher passes on to him. That means not adding to or subtracting from it.
2. He must faithfully review the material and internalize it by developing fresh insights and fitting them into the whole.
3. He must be overwhelmed with a great sense of humility and plead to Hashem for help in facing the great challenge.
4. He must address the challenge with a level of commitment comparable to what people feel when they travel far and wide to earn their livelihood.
5. He must also bring to his effort a level of joyful excitement comparable to that which a person feels when he is hunting for buried treasure.

- (א) בְּנֵי אִם תִּקַּח אִמְרֵי וּמִצְוֹתַי תִּצְפֹּן אֶתְךָ :
 (ב) לְהִקְשִׁיב לְחִכְמָה אֲזַנְךָ תִּטָּה לְבָבְךָ לְתַבּוּנָה :
 (ג) כִּי אִם לְבִינָה תִקְרָא לְתַבּוּנָה תִתֵּן קוֹלְךָ :
 (ד) אִם תִּבְקֹשֶׁנָּה כַּכֶּסֶף וְכַמְטָמוֹנִים תַּחֲפֹשְׁנָה :

2:1. My son, you will gain the rewards of wisdom if you *take my words* to heart and keep my instructions with you,

2:2.

1- to make your ear listen carefully to wisdom,

2- to incline your heart to understanding,

2:3. but only

3- if you call for the insight, raise your voice for the understanding,

2:4. and only

4- if you seek it like money,

5- and you search for it as you search for buried treasure.

Learning Mishlei

(א) בְּנֵי אִם תִּקַּח אִמְרֵי
וּמִצְוֹתַי תִּצְפֹּן אֲתָךְ :

My son— בְּנֵי ,

I know that it will not be easy for you to devote yourself to the great challenge of acquiring wisdom.

But **if you take my words** of advice to heart — **אִם תִּקַּח אִמְרֵי**
and keep my instructions with you — **וּמִצְוֹתַי תִּצְפֹּן אֲתָךְ**
at all times, your reward will be very great.

(ב) לְהִקְשִׁיב לַחֲכָמָה אֲזַנְךָ

1- **To listen carefully to the wisdom** — **לְהִקְשִׁיב לַחֲכָמָה**
with **your ear** — **אֲזַנְךָ.**

תִּטָּה לְבָבְךָ לְתַבּוּנָה :

2- But listening is not enough. You will need to internalize what you have heard by reviewing it and thinking it through.

That means you must **incline your heart to understanding** — **תִּטָּה לְבָבְךָ לְתַבּוּנָה.**

If you do this, you will gain new insight and add to the wisdom you have absorbed from listening to me. In this way your appreciation for learning will be heartfelt and the wisdom will become part of you.

(ג) כִּי אִם לְבִינָה תִקְרָא
לְתִבּוּנָה תִתֵּן קוֹלְךָ :

(3) Furthermore, you must feel a great sense of humility.

You will succeed **only if you call for the insight** — **כִּי אִם לְבִינָה תִקְרָא** — to come to you in the way that you might call upon a very dear friend.

You will then feel that you want to loudly **raise your voice** in sincere *tefillah* to Hashem, asking Him **for the broad understanding** — **לְתִבּוּנָה תִתֵּן קוֹלְךָ** — that will show how your new insights fit into the larger picture.

(ד) אִם תִּבְקֶשְׁנָה כְּכֶסֶף

(4) You will gain wisdom only **if you seek it** — **אִם תִּבְקֶשְׁנָה** with total dedication **as** you do when you travel far and wide to seek **money** — **כְּכֶסֶף**.

וְכַמְטָמוֹנִים תִּחְפְּשֶׁנָּה :

(5) Finally, you will succeed only if **you search for it** with intense excitement and pleasure **as** you do when **you search for buried treasure** — **וְכַמְטָמוֹנִים תִּחְפְּשֶׁנָּה**.