

## Mishlei 01-10

# Bad Influences

[Pesukim 1:10 thru 1:19]

### Key Concepts

My son, don't be surprised if someone approaches you with a shady get-rich scheme that seems too good to be true. Unfortunately, you won't find out until it is too late that it is too good to be true and you will pay a high price for the lesson.

You may very well be tempted because the person seems trustworthy, and he assures you of his friendship. It may give you a good feeling to be part of such a "successful" venture, but the end can be tragedy.

My advice is to stay away from suspicious schemes and from the kinds of people who promote them. In the end they will fail. Don't let them drag you down with them.

### Exploring Mishlei

**AN INVITATION TO TROUBLE.** When you hear of a dishonest scheme, I suggest you visualize it as an invitation to join a band of highwaymen, who claim they can get rich by robbing rich wayfarers. The story they give you makes your eyes light up and you are tempted to overlook the terrible wrong they are doing and the risks they are taking.

(י) בְּנֵי אִם יִפְתּוּחַ חֲטָאִים אֶל תְּבֵא:  
 (יא) אִם יֹאמְרוּ לָכֵה אֲתָנוּ נֶאֱרָבָה לְדָם נִצְפְּנָה לְנִקְי חַנּוּם:  
 (יב) נִבְלָעִים כְּשֶׂאֹל חַיִּים וּתְמִימִים כְּיֹרְדֵי בּוֹר:  
 (יג) כָּל הַזֶּה יִקָּר נִמְצָא נִמְלֵא בְּתֵינוּ שָׁלָל:  
 (יד) גּוֹרְלֶךָ תִּפְּיֵל בְּתוֹכֵנוּ כִּי־ס אֶחָד יִהְיֶה לְכַלְנוּ:

***(10) My son, if sinners entice you, don't go along. (11) If they say, "Come with us. We'll set up an ambush to spill blood. We'll hide to catch the innocent, free of complications. (12) We'll swallow them alive like the grave. We'll swallow them whole like those who descend into the pit. (13) All kinds of valuables are to be found. We'll fill our houses with plunder. (14) Cast in your lot among us. We will share in one purse."***

**GOOD ADVICE.** Turn down the invitation, no matter how tempting it sounds. You are like a bird who sees tasty seeds laid out in a hunter's trap. The bird fools itself into thinking that the seeds just happen to be there and there will be no price to pay. But the bird will inevitably get caught and likewise, the robbers are likely to add their new "friend" to their list of victims.

(טו) בְּנֵי אֵל תִּלְךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ אֲתָם מִנַּע רַגְלְךָ מִנְתִּיבָתָם :  
 (טז) כִּי רַגְלֵיהֶם לָרַע יְרוּצוּ וַיִּמְהָרוּ לְשֹׁפֵךְ דָּם :  
 (יז) כִּי חֲנָם מְזִרָה הָרֶשֶׁת בְּעֵינָי פֶּל בַּעַל פִּנְיָ :  
 (יח) וְהֵם לְדָמָם יֶאָרְבוּ יִצְפְּנוּ לְנַפְשָׁתָם :  
 (יט) כֵּן אַרְחוֹת כָּל בַּצֵּעַ בַּצֵּעַ אֶת נַפְשׁ בַּעֲלָיו יִקַּח :

*(15) My son, don't go with them on their way. Keep your feet away from their paths. (16) For their feet are running to evil and they are rushing to spill blood. (17) For the trapper's net is spread out for no purpose in the eyes of every winged creature. (18) They are waiting in ambush for their victims' blood and they are hiding themselves to take their [victims' lives]. (19) Such are the ways of all who make unjust profit. They take the lives of its owners, including yours.*

## Learning Mishlei

### AN INVITATION TO TROUBLE.

(י) בְּנֵי אִם יִפְתּוּדָ חַטָּאִים אֶל תִּבָּא :

My son—בְּנֵי,

if sinners entice you — אִם יִפְתּוּדָ חַטָּאִים

to join their group, don't go along—אֶל תִּבָּא

with them because what they have in mind will end up disastrously for you.

(יא) אִם יֹאמְרוּ לָכֶה אֲתָנוּ  
 נֶאֱרָבָה לְדָם נִצְפְּנָה לְנִקְי חֲנָם :

If they say—אִם יֹאמְרוּ:

“Come with us — לָכֶה אֲתָנוּ

and get rich. You won't have to do anything bad yourself.

We know of a rich man carrying large amounts of cash and diamonds.

We'll set up an ambush — נֶאֱרָבָה

and grab it all even if we have to spill some blood — לְדָם.

But don't worry because we'll hide — נִצְפְּנָה

in a good spot **to** catch that **innocent** — לְנֶקֶי  
fool and we will be **free** — חֲנֹם  
of any complications.”

(יב) נִבְלָעִם כְּשֶׂאוֹל חַיִּים  
וְתַמְיָמִים כְּיֹרְדֵי בֹר :

“Stick with us and we’ll catch many more unsuspecting fools on the road and in their homes. We’ll have the advantage of surprise so it will be as if we swallow them alive — נִבְלָעִם חַיִּים

**like the grave** — כְּשֶׂאוֹל

that swallows bodies. Everything they have will be ours.

**And** so we will swallow them **whole** — וְתַמְיָמִים

without effort as if they fell **down into an** open pit — כְּיֹרְדֵי בֹר

(יג) כָּל הוֹן יָקָר נִמְצָא  
נִמְלֵא בְּתֵינוּ שָׁלָל :

“All kinds of **precious wealth**— כָּל הוֹן יָקָר  
**are** there to be **found** — נִמְצָא.

**We will fill our houses with loot** — נִמְלֵא בְּתֵינוּ שָׁלָל.”

(יד) גּוֹרְלָךְ תִּפְּיֵל בְּתוֹכֵנוּ  
כִּי־סֵ אֶחָד יִהְיֶה לְכָלֵנוּ :

“Cast in your lot among us — גּוֹרְלָךְ תִּפְּיֵל בְּתוֹכֵנוּ and you will get your fair share of the the loot to take home with you. But in addition,

**we will have one purse** — כִּי־סֵ אֶחָד יִהְיֶה לְכָלֵנוּ

with a common fund so that we can celebrate together. You will be part of our great team and you will reap the rewards with us.”

### GOOD ADVICE.

(טו) בְּנִי אַל תֵּלֵךְ בְּדַרְךְ אֲתָם  
מִנֵּעַ רַגְלֶךָ מִנְּתִיבָתָם :

**My son**—בְּנִי,

**don’t go with them on** their crooked way — אַל תֵּלֵךְ בְּדַרְךְ אֲתָם.

Even if you don’t join them in their ambush, sooner or later another opportunity will arise and they will tempt you to get involved. Your defenses will be lowered and what they are doing will come to seem normal to you.

**Keep your feet from their paths — מִנֵּע רַגְלֶךָ מִנְתִּיבָתָם**  
so you won't encounter them by chance and get drawn in.

(טז) כִּי רַגְלֵיהֶם לָרַע יָרוּצוּ  
וַיִּמְהָרוּ לְשִׁפְךָ דָּם :

**For their feet are running to do evil — כִּי רַגְלֵיהֶם לָרַע יָרוּצוּ**  
**and they are rushing to spill blood — וַיִּמְהָרוּ לְשִׁפְךָ דָּם.**

These people are driven by greed and the excitement of violence. And so they take chances, not stopping to calculate the risk of being caught. They may find success at first, but in the end they will fail.

(יז) כִּי חֲנָם מְזַרְהָ הָרֶשֶׁת  
בְּעֵינָי כָּל בֹּעַל כָּנָף :

Don't think you will come out of this unharmed. That's what the foolish bird thinks when it ventures into the hunter's net to eat the tasty seeds he has placed there.

**For the net seems spread out for no purpose — כִּי חֲנָם מְזַרְהָ הָרֶשֶׁת**  
**in the eyes of every winged creature — בְּעֵינָי כָּל בֹּעַל כָּנָף.**

The birds are focused on the seeds and pay no attention to the net that will close in on them.

(יח) וְהֵם לְדָמָם יֶאֱרְבוּ  
יִצְפְּנוּ לְנַפְשָׁתָם :

My son, your new friends act as though they have your interest at heart but that's what the birds think when they see the hunter spreading the bait. They think he is giving them food out of the kindness of his heart. In the end you yourself will be a victim because the robbers will never be satisfied.

**They are waiting in ambush for their victims' blood — וְהֵם לְדָמָם יֶאֱרְבוּ**  
**and they are hiding themselves to take their victims' lives— יִצְפְּנוּ לְנַפְשָׁתָם.**

Once they draw you into their net you will be their next victim.

(יט) כִּן אֶרְחוֹת כָּל בֹּצֵעַ בֹּצֵעַ  
אֶת נַפְשׁ בֹּעֲלָיו יִקַּח :

**Such are the ways of all who make unjust profit — כִּן אַרְחוֹת כָּל בֹּצֵעַ בְּצַע**  
from property that isn't theirs. They don't stop until  
**they take the lives of its owners — אֶת נַפְשׁ בְּעֵלָיו יִקַּח.**  
In the end they will take your possessions, and your life will be forfeit as well.

## Sources

The primary sources used in the interpretation of the verses of this segment are listed below.

**א' ח' – רבינו יונה, רלב"ג, רבינו בחיי, מצודות, המאירי,  
רשר"ה, מלבי"ם  
א' ט' – רבינו יונה, מלבי"ם**