

Mishlei 10-03

Wealth and Hunger

Key Concepts

In the previous segment Mishlei taught us to place restraints on the acquisition of wealth and to set aside an appropriate portion to help others. Now he responds to those who are concerned that they will not have enough money to meet every contingency. Are not extraordinary efforts justified in case of recession or famine? The answer he gives is that Hashem watches over the righteous and will not let them go hungry. Hashem loves the righteous and even when times are difficult, it is a temporary trial designed to enable the righteous man to perfect himself. In contrast Hashem hates the wicked and sees to it that any assets they have acquired in their exploitation of others will be pushed aside.

Learning Mishlei

(ג) לֹא יִרְעִיב ה' נֶפֶשׁ צַדִּיק וְהוֹת רְשָׁעִים יִהְדָּף:

(3) Hashem will not impose hunger upon the soul of the righteous but the assets of the wicked will be pushed aside.

"Hashem watches over the righteous and protects their wealth. Thus, even in times of famine, **Hashem will not impose hunger — לֹא יִרְעִיב ה'** upon the soul of the righteous — נֶפֶשׁ צַדִּיק. His soul will continue to be gratified physically and spiritually, **but the assets of the wicked — וְהוֹת רְשָׁעִים** and their desires **will be pushed aside — יִהְדָּף**. It is they who will experience misfortune rather than the righteous."

THE RIGHTEOUS

(1) Don't hold yourself back from helping the poor out of concern that you won't have enough for yourself in time of need. And don't make extraordinary or unlawful efforts to acquire wealth. As long as you are living a righteous life and are helping those in need you won't suffer privation, even in times of general famine. On the contrary, you will see success in all your endeavors and will always be able to feed your family.

(2) Hashem watches over the righteous person, and even when he is being put through trials and tests, this is in order to allow him to perfect and

ennoble himself. Hashem does this out of fatherly love and will not let him be destroyed. Evil, however, unfailingly ends in ruin.

THE WICKED

(3) The wicked are hated by Hashem as well as their fellow man. And so they and any one who joins them will be pushed aside together with their wealth.

(4) It may happen that the wicked experience success and their wealth expands, you will find that it is only temporary and their wealth will ultimately be pushed aside and disintegrate on its own.

Sources

The primary sources used for the insights illuminating this segment are listed below.

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|--------------------------------|------------------|
| (1) - אבן עזרא, המאירי, מלבי"ם | (3) - אבן יחיאל |
| (2) - רש"ה | (4) - תבונת משלי |

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