

## Mishlei 11-04

# Wealth

### Key Concepts

People accumulate wealth as a bulwark against misfortune. They think that the more money they have the more protected they are. But they are mistaken, because the money they spend may be a better protection than the money they save. That is the case if the money is used to give charity to help those in need. It is the *tzedakah* they gave which will save them from death.

### Exploring Mishlei

(ד) לאִיוֹעִיל הוֹן בְּיוֹם עֶבְרָה וְצַדִּיקָה תִצְלֵל מִמָּוֶת:

***Wealth will not help in the day of wrath,  
but charity will save from death.***

Even honestly acquired wealth will be of no help when a person faces tragedy in a time of misfortune. But what can save him is the charity he gave during his lifetime.

A very similar message is given by the proverb in [Mishlei 10-02](#). However, in that proverb Mishlei is referring to dishonestly acquired wealth. Now he is adding that even honestly acquired wealth is of little value compared to the money spent in doing *mitzvos*.

### Learning Mishlei

Wealth will not help — לאִיוֹעִיל הוֹן —  
in the day of wrath. — בְּיוֹם עֶבְרָה —  
but charity — וְצַדִּיקָה —  
will save the giver from death — תִצְלֵל מִמָּוֶת —

### Additional Insights

#### WEALTH

(1) Even honestly acquired wealth will not protect the owner from unexpected personal misfortune. (רבינו יונה, המאירי, רלב"ג)

(2) If wealth is honestly acquired it may prove to be of some value, but only under normal world conditions, such as during peace time. (מלבי"ם)

(3) During times of war or calamity when Hashem is expressing His anger over the sins of mankind, even the wealth that a person has acquired honestly will be of no value in saving him. (מלבי"ם)

(4) At the time of a person's death, when he is personally subject to the judgment of Hashem over his sins, the material wealth he acquired during his lifetime will be of no help to him. (הגר"א)

(5) If wealth is honestly acquired with conscious attention to the laws of the Torah, including the practice of *tzedek* (going beyond the letter of the law), it will work in his favor to save him from eternal death. (חנוך לנער)

#### CHARITY

(6) If a person gives a suitable portion of his wealth to charity, it will save him from personal disaster. (רבינו יונה, המאירי, רלב"ג)

(7) The charity that an individual has given will work in his favor to save him from death even in times of war when Hashem is expressing His anger over the sins of mankind. (מצודות, מלבי"ם)

(8) At the time of a person's death, when he is subject to the wrath of Hashem over his sins, special note will be taken of the charity he gave during his lifetime, and that will contribute to his surviving eternal death. (הגר"א)