

## Mishlei 11-07

# Lost Hope

### Key Concepts

This proverb is a response to those who envy the apparent good fortune of the *rasha* (wicked person). Such a person may be defined as one who devotes his energies to physical pleasures and accomplishments. When he dies he leaves nothing of spiritual value behind. Thus, all his apparent success is temporary and will come to an end on the day of his death.

### Exploring Mishlei

(ז) בְּמוֹת אָדָם רָשָׁע תֵּאבֵד תִּקְוָה וְתוֹחֶלֶת אֲנִים אֲבָדָה :

*When a wicked man dies, hope is lost,  
and the prospect of physical strength perishes.*

The two parts of this proverb are not designed to contrast the *rasha* with the *tzadik* as is often the case throughout Mishlei. Instead the first part deals with the short-term hopes growth associated with the life of the *rasha*. All these come to an end when he dies.

The second part deals with long-term prospects for the physical body. These are also doomed to disappointment. At death, his physical strength is wiped out and no meaningful legacy is left behind.

### Learning Mishlei

(ז) בְּמוֹת אָדָם רָשָׁע תֵּאבֵד תִּקְוָה  
אֲנִים אֲבָדָה :

(7) **When a man dies** – בְּמוֹת אָדָם

while still a **rasha** – רָשָׁע

all **hope** for him to do *teshuvah* is lost – תֵּאבֵד תִּקְוָה

and the **prospect** – וְתוֹחֶלֶת

of what can be achieved with his **physical strength** – אֲנִים

**perishes** – אֲבָדָה.

### Additional Insights

LOST HOPE

(1) The imagined success of the *rasha* is expressed in his hope for constantly increasing wealth and physical pleasure. But all that comes to an end on the day of his death. (רבינו יונה, המאירי, רבינו בחיי, הגר"א)

(2) The *rasha* may have hopes of perpetrating criminal schemes, but all are lost on the day of his death. (חנוך לנער)

(3) A person who is thinking about doing *teshuvah* for his sins should not put it off, for the opportunity to do *teshuvah* is lost on the day of his death. It is an eternal loss with no hope of remedy. (המאירי, אבן יחיאל, חנוך לנער)

(4) While he was alive the *rasha* was accumulating wealth and hoping that it would save him when calamity strikes. But that hope is dashed on the day of his death because then no amount of money will save him. (See [11-04](#)) (שבט מיהודה)

(5) The *rasha* has uncertain hopes for chance events that will bring him financial success, but when he dies, these hopes vanish. (מלבי"ם)

#### LOST PROSPECT

(6) The long-term prospect of leaving wealth to his children which seems real during his lifetime is placed in jeopardy when he dies. (הגר"א, מלבי"ם)

(7) The expectation of what a man can do with his physical strength vanishes when he dies. (חנוך לנער)

(8) Children expecting to inherit the wealth of their father will find that the prospect of a great inheritance vanishes when his wealth is consumed by creditors and lawyers. (מלבי"ם)