

Mishlei 12-03

Stability and Continuity

Key Concepts

As we have seen in Segment 10-29, a life of stability is the natural reward for righteousness and integrity. A life that is long and productive can be visualized as a tower having strong foundations. Even when powerful winds shake the tower, its foundations remain firm.

In the current segment Mishlei builds on this concept, adding the important element of continuity, which is associated with the roots of a living tree. Roots provide vital nourishment to the tree. Similarly, the righteous person has deep spiritual roots which enable him to transmit his legacy to future generations.

Exploring Mishlei

(ג) לֹא יִכּוֹן אָדָם בְּרָשָׁע, וְשֹׁרֵשׁ צְדִיקִים בֶּל יִמוּט:

(3) A man will not be established by wickedness but the root of the righteous will never falter.

This proverb examines the concepts of stability and continuity by contrasting the destinies of righteous and wicked people. Righteous people (*tzadikim*) will not only have lives of stability, they will be blessed with continuity because of their deep roots. In contrast, wicked people (*resha'im*) who are without spiritual roots will not have the benefit of continuity. They will not even have the benefit of stability because their lives are not established on firm foundations.

Learning Mishlei

(ג) לֹא יִכּוֹן אָדָם בְּרָשָׁע
וְשֹׁרֵשׁ צְדִיקִים בֶּל יִמוּט:

A man will not be established by wickedness – לֹא יִכּוֹן אָדָם בְּרָשָׁע, but the root of the righteous will never falter – וְשֹׁרֵשׁ צְדִיקִים בֶּל יִמוּט.

Additional Insights

A series of insights illuminating this proverb are presented below. The numbers identifying the insights refer to the listing of sources at the end of the segment.

(1) A person who builds his life on a foundation of material wealth that he gathered unethically will find that it is not strong enough to support him. His material possession will be lost in the end. (Metz, Malbnim)

(2) Even if you see a rasha who seems to be enjoying a good life, you should know that that he will not be able to pass it on to his descendants for it lacks permanence . (RY, HAG)

(3) The person who grows deep roots of connection to the Torah will stand firm despite the storms of life. Even when the tree is shaken, it will steady itself again because its roots are firm. (METRZ, RSRH)

Sources

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

(3) - מצודות, רשר"ה

(1) - מצודות, מלבי"ם

(2) - רבינו יונה, הגר"א

© COPYRIGHT NOTICE
All rights to this document are reserved by the author. For further information contact Isaac Kirzner at isaac@kirzner.com