

Mishlei 12-07

Foundations

Key Concepts

Righteous people (*tzaddikim*) build their lives on firm foundations. They are like a house that is designed to endure. Even when they encounter a setback they do not lose their confidence and their trust in Hashem. In contrast, the wicked (*resha'im*) have built their lives on superficialities. When their facades collapse, such people themselves become buried under the ruins.

Exploring Mishlei

(ז) הַפּוֹדֵר רְשָׁעִים וְאֵינָם וְבֵית צַדִּיקִים יַעֲמֹד:

(6) [When] the *resha'im* are overthrown, they are no more, but the house of the *tzaddikim* will endure.

What happens to *resha'im* is described as being “overthrown,” representing an utter catastrophe, a reversal of all their hopes and achievements. The *tzaddikim*, even if they should deserve punishment, can be sure that their solid basis in existence will be untouched.

Learning Mishlei

(ז) הַפּוֹדֵר רְשָׁעִים וְאֵינָם
וְבֵית צַדִּיקִים יַעֲמֹד:

When Hashem punishes **the *resha'im***, they **are overthrown and are no more** — **הַפּוֹדֵר רְשָׁעִים וְאֵינָם**, because their downfall is permanent. **But** when He punishes *tzaddikim*, their fall is temporary. Eventually, they rise again for **the house of the *tzaddikim* will endure** — **וְבֵית צַדִּיקִים יַעֲמֹד**.

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) As long as events are unfolding normally, Hashem allows *resha'im* to continue along their wicked ways. But as soon as there is some upheaval in

the world, they disappear as if they never were. This has come true for individuals and entire nations.

(2) The first major example of the destruction of *resha'im* was the Generation of the Flood which was completely obliterated (*Bereishis* 7:23). Other examples were the destruction of Sodom (ibid. 7:25) and the army of Pharaoh (*Shemos* 14:28).

(3) When God punishes Yisrael, however, their fall is temporary. Eventually, they rise again, as it says, "Don't rejoice over me, my enemy. Although I have fallen, I will rise again. Though I sit in the darkness, Hashem is a light unto me!" (*Michah* 7:8).

(4) The *resha'im* may appear firmly rooted, but when their time is up Hashem overturns them in a complete reversal so that they disappear from existence.

Sources

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

- (1) - דעת סופרים, רשר"ה
- (2) - אלשיך, ילקוט שמעוני
- (3) - ילקוט שמעוני
- (4) - מלבי"ם