

**Mishlei 15-18****Forbearance IV****Key Concepts**

When a person is irritated by a challenging remark he feels a great compulsion to answer back and demonstrate that his point of view is right. Giving the other party the last word implies that he admits being wrong and it takes great humility to accept that, especially when he is convinced he is right.

The trouble is that disputes are often caused when both adversaries are convinced they are right. It takes a wise man to realize that peace and harmony are more important than being acknowledged as right. Such a man exercises forbearance and thereby avoids conflict.

**Exploring Mishlei**

(יח) אִישׁ חָמָה יַגְרֶה מְדוֹן וְאָרֶךְ אַפַּיִם יַשְׁקִיט רִיב:

*An irascible man stirs up strife, but a forbearing man calms conflict.*

The irascible man is easily provoked by minor irritations. The result of showing anger is the incitement of strife. In seeking an outlet for his rage the irascible man arouses general contention. In contrast, a patient man is difficult to annoy because he hates strife. He pacifies a potential conflict before it gets out of hand.

This is the fourth proverb to drive home the importance of forbearance in the face of provocation. The four proverbs may be summarized as follows:

Forbearance I (14-16). Learn to be afraid of giving in to unrestrained anger. Don't assume you can safely enjoy the release that you get from experiencing anger.

Forbearance II (15-01). Calm down an angry person by responding with a gentle answer. Avoid making provocative remarks that promote strife.

Forbearance III (14-19). You can benefit from showing forbearance by the understanding you will gain from the situation. In contrast you will learn that failing to show forbearance is ultimately self-destructive.

Forbearance IV (15-18). Failure to show forbearance leads to strife. In contrast showing forbearance promotes peace and harmony.

## Learning Mishlei

(יח) אִישׁ חֲמָה יִגְרֶה מְדוֹן  
וְאָרְךְ אַפַּיִם יִשְׁקִיט רִיב:

**An irascible man stirs up fresh strife – אִישׁ חֲמָה יִגְרֶה מְדוֹן but a forbearing man calms even a long-standing conflict – וְאָרְךְ אַפַּיִם יִשְׁקִיט רִיב.**

## 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) The man of forbearance shows restraint in the face of provocation. He is not quick to respond to a challenge, but allows the intensity of the conflict to dissipate.

(2) If you are looking to settle dispute, dont use a quick-tempered person. He is likely to object to the reasoning of one of the parties and will be harsh with him. This will exacerbate the situation instead of calming it.

(3) Situations where a new conflict (מְדוֹן) is beginning deserve special attention because they are easier to control. A situation involving a long-standing conflict (רִיב) is more difficult to resolve.

## Sources

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

(3) - הגר"א, שבט מיהודה

(1) - רש"י

(2) - רבינו יונה