

Mishlei 15-26

Deceit

Key Concepts

The ability to speak is the quality that defines a human being. It is Hashem's great gift to mankind. However, speech is only meaningful when it expresses the speaker's thoughts, formed into words and sentences. A person who perverts the gift of speech by disconnecting it from the thoughts behind it, has abused Hashem's kindness and has repaid kindness with an abomination

This is especially true if one considers the intentional deceit that underlies false speech. Hashem has built His world out of kindness and truth. Both of these essential components of Creation are corrupted by deceitful speech.

Exploring Mishlei

(כו) תוֹעֵבַת ה' מְחֻשְׁבוֹת רָע וּטְהוּרִים אֲמָרֵי נְעָם:

(26) Evil intentions are an abomination to Hashem. Purity [of thought is what should accompany] pleasant words.

This proverb contrasts pleasant words that are spoken deceitfully with pleasant words that represent purity of thought.

The harm that can be done by deceitful speech is also explored in Segment 15-08 (Hypocrisy).

Learning Mishlei

(כו) תוֹעֵבַת ה' מְחֻשְׁבוֹת רָע

וּטְהוּרִים אֲמָרֵי נְעָם:

Evil intentions are an abomination to Hashem — תוֹעֵבַת ה' מְחֻשְׁבוֹת רָע, especially when they are camouflaged by pleasant words. **Purity** of thought — וּטְהוּרִים is what should accompany **pleasant words** — אֲמָרֵי נְעָם.

Additional Insights

A series of additional 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) Pure words are like pure silver, which is defined by the absence of contaminants. Evil thoughts are the impurities that contaminate spoken words.

(2) Hashem listens to spoken words and expects them to be pure.

(3) Hashem does not always hold a person accountable for his thoughts. However, when evil thoughts are negated by the person's actions that person has provoked Hashem's anger.

Sources

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

(2) - מלבים

(1) - אבן עזרא

(2) - מצודות