

Mishlei 16-03

Awareness

Key Concepts

We can assume that a righteous person would like to do the right thing in every situation. But making that decision is often difficult because of all the various factors, spiritual and material, affecting any decision. How do you know what is right?

One way or the other a decision will be made and some action will be carried out. Mishlei suggests that in making the decision you separate the thoughts that precedes the action from the physical action itself. Be aware and have in mind that the thoughts are your own, but the physical action will ultimately be carried by Hashem. In effect, your thoughts and plans are a program that you are expecting Hashem to follow.

So you should ask yourself. "What is it that I want Hashem to do for me? Is this a worthy and appropriate action?" If it is, than your thought process has been validated and you can feel reasonably confident that it is correct. If not, perhaps you should rethink the matter.

Exploring Mishlei

(ג) גַּל אֶל ה' מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וַיִּכְנֹן מַחְשְׁבֹתֶיךָ:

Commit your actions to Hashem and your thoughts will be right.

This proverb distinguishes a person's thoughts from the resulting actions. The person is advised to be aware that once he "acts" he is actually giving up control of this deed to Hashem. For it is Hashem that will be actually carrying out the action, for better or worse.

That awareness should serve as a restraint affecting what the person is thinking as he makes his decision. The result will hopefully be a greater degree of rightness in his thinking, and that will have a favorable effect on the final outcome.

Learning Mishlei

(ג) גַּל אֶל ה' מַעֲשֶׂיךָ

וַיִּכְנֹן מִחֲשַׁבְתֶּיךָ:

Commit your actions to be carried out by the will of **Hashem** — **גַּל אֶל ה' מַעֲשֶׂיךָ**, **and** you can trust that **your thoughts** preceding the actions **will be right** — **וַיִּכְנֹן מִחֲשַׁבְתֶּיךָ**.

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) Focus on the fact that you only have power over your thoughts, but it is Hashem who will carry out the action that your thoughts are pointing to. If you do, you will succeed in getting your thoughts to contribute to the actual correct result.

(2) A person's thoughts are by nature fleeting and impermanent. If he wants to solidify his thoughts and make them have a lasting effect, he should dedicate all his actions to the glory of Hashem. The effect will be that his thoughts will be devoted to doing Hashem's will. This will give them a lasting effect.

(3) If you place your trust in Hashem and ask Him to do what is best for you in every situation, your tefilos will be fulfilled.

(4) Remember that as you mentally weigh your options, there is an instinctive tendency for a person to justify his desired action. If you then ask yourself what Hashem wants, you will come to a decision that is in line with His will.

(5) Remember that both your thoughts and the resulting actions are visible to Hashem. Therefore strive to reconcile them. The words you speak in your tefilos are actions. Are they matched to the thoughts that pass through your mind as you say those words? Are your uncontrolled and random thoughts during tefillah like the words mouthed by a mentally defective person in the street?

Sources

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

(4) -המאירי, הגר"א

(5) - שבט מיהודה

(1) - רבינו יונה

(2) - מלבים, מצודות

(3) -רש"י, רלב"ג