

## Mishlei 18-22

# Good – Marriage

### Key Concepts

The idea of טוב, good, is inherent in the existence of the world. The Torah tells us that each aspect of existence reflects the will of the Creator and, because it reflects His will, He called it טוב.

Man was originally created without a wife and the Torah tells us that this was done to teach us that a world in which man is alone is not “good,” as it says, **לא טוב** **היות האדם לבדו**, “It is not good that man be alone” (*Bereishis* 2:18). The quality of “good” in mankind came about through the creation of the first woman.

Mishlei now draws upon this concept in a proverb that describes the process of finding a wife: **מצא אשה מצא טוב**, *He who has found a wife has found the good*. If a man fulfills the will of His Creator in finding a woman to marry, he has brought out the quality of “good” that brings blessing to the world.

Mishlei is using the term “find” to refer to the idea of marriage because the potential for blessing was already there. It is up to man to take the necessary step to “find” the woman with whom the blessing of “good” comes into being for them both.

This suggests an important difference between marriage and shopping. In shopping for an expensive product, the buyer defines exactly what he wants (size, color, etc.) and checks each item under consideration to make sure it meets all of his specifications.

That approach cannot work in bringing together two complex human beings, especially in the light of the fact every human being is in the process of continuous improvement and development throughout his life.

Marriage can only work if the entire process of Creation is active in matching the man and woman. If the man and woman trust in Hashem and act on that trust by focusing on qualities of human goodness, He will introduce His blessing and the man will be guided by that blessing to “find” the woman that was meant for him.

## Exploring Mishlei

(כב) **מָצָא אִשָּׁה מָצָא טוֹב וַיִּפֶּק רְצוֹן מֵה'**  
 (22) ***He who has found a wife has found the good,  
 and has brought forth good will from Hashem.***

By invoking the Torah concept of "good", the proverb suggests the special ingredient in the Shidduch process that brings with it the all-important blessing from Hashem. That ingredient is the idea that the primary motivation of the couple is the desire to fulfill the **רְצוֹן**, "will," of Hashem. The resulting blessing brings forth His "goodwill". If, on the other hand, they are overly influenced by selfish motivations, such as physical appearance or wealth the Shidduch cannot count on His blessing.

### Learning Mishlei

(22) ***He who has found a wife – מָצָא אִשָּׁה  
 has found the good – מָצָא טוֹב  
 and has brought forth – וַיִּפֶּק  
 good will from Hashem – רְצוֹן מֵה' .***

### Additional Insights

[1] When a man marries the woman that is right for him, not only is the entire relationship good, the woman herself becomes the epitome of goodness. If his motivation in marriage is beauty, money or honor, there is a good chance that neither will last. But if he marries because of the perceived goodness of his betrothed, she will remain "good" throughout his life. (רבינו יונה)

[2] Even before a child is born, Hashem has already chosen his or her designated mate. If the couple let themselves be guided by His spirit, they will "find" the spouse that was destined for them and that will be the one that is "good."

(שבט מיהודה)