

Mishlei 20-25

Repentance

Key Concepts

In this proverb Mishlei speaks of a man who realizes he is guilty of a serious sin. The offense is so serious that it undermines his own sense of holiness and prevents him from serving Hashem with a clear conscience. The recommended solution is to repent and plead with Hashem forgiveness. The atonement process begins with holy vows promising to make amends and change his ways.,

Exploring Mishlei

(כה) מוקש אדם ילע קדש ואחר נדרים לבקר:

(25) A man's stumbling in sin undermines his sanctity, and his remedy is to seek vows of atonement.

The vows referred to here are ones in which the person commits himself to some action or donation. This might include offering a sacrifice and denying himself certain benefits. It might also include steps to correct defective character traits.

Learning Mishlei

(25) A man's stumbling in sin — מוקש אדם corrupts the sanctity of his soul. — ילע קדש

In order to restore the purity of his sanctity, he needs **to seek vows** of atonement — **ואחר נדרים לבקר** , make amends for having sinned, and beseech Hashem for forgiveness.

Additional Insights

[1] The proverb describes the consequence of sin as undermining a person's intrinsic holiness. By making vows of self-denial and bringing offerings he hopes to restore the purity of his soul. (רש"י)

[2] If a person finds difficulty in fulfilling his vows, the corruption of his soul may be the very cause of his problem. (רלב"ג)