

Mishlei 21-18

Substitution

Key Concepts

In Segment 11-08 we have seen that there is a balance in the way Hashem administers the world so that when good people are saved, the adversity that they avoided is applied to bad people who deserve it. This principle of substitution can occur in many ways, one of which is the Purim story, when Mordechai was saved, and Haman effectively took his place.

Exploring Mishlei

(יח) כִּפֹּר לְצַדִּיק רָשָׁע וְתַחַת יִשְׂרָיִם בּוֹגֵד :

**(18) *The wicked man is atonement for the righteous one;
and a man of treachery in place of the upright.***

A good person may escape a misfortune by resisting the temptation of committing an offense for which he would have been punished. A *rasha* then comes forward of his own volition to commit the offense, thinking to gain by it, but then suffering the very fate which the *tzadik* avoided. This is what happened when Shaul commanded Avner to destroy the innocent Kohanim of Nov. He refused and Doeg took his place (I *Shmuel* 22:18).

Learning Mishlei

(18) As **atonement for a *tzadik*** — **כִּפֹּר לְצַדִּיק**
there is the **wicked man.** — **רָשָׁע ,**
and in place of the upright — **וְתַחַת יִשְׂרָיִם**
there is a **man of treachery** — **בּוֹגֵד**