

## Mishlei 22-23

### Defender of the Poor

#### Key Concepts

It is Hashem Who decides who will be poor. This decision is included in Hashem's plan for mankind. Accordingly, anyone who robs the poor is, in effect, insulting the Creator.

The individual who robs a poor man is committing a serious crime. It is like taking his life. Therefore, it is to be anticipated that Hashem will avenge the soul of the victim by taking the life of the criminal who robbed him.

#### Exploring Mishlei

(כג) כִּי ה' יִרִיב רִיבָם וְקִבֵּעַ אֶת קִבְעֵיהֶם נִפְשׁ:

(23) *Don't rob the poor because Hashem fights for their cause. He strikes those who strike them, to their very life.*

This proverb puts the robbery of a poor man into a new perspective. Not only, is such a robbery an especially cruel thing to do, it is a direct flouting of Hashem's will. The perpetrator who commits such a crime may be punished in Heaven by the loss of his own life.

#### Learning Mishlei

(23) For Hashem fights for their cause (of the poor) — כִּי ה' יִרִיב רִיבָם —

He strikes those (wicked people) — וְקִבֵּעַ

who strike them (the poor) — אֶת קִבְעֵיהֶם —

(and He does so) *to the very life* — נִפְשׁ —

of the perpetrator.