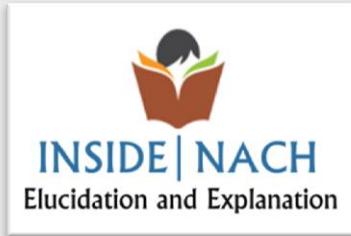


פרק טו



משלי

PEREK OVERVIEW:

Perek 15: Man cannot conceal himself from Hashem, as Hashem is Omnipresent and witnesses every action, whether positive or negative (Metzudas David 15:3). Insincere sacrifices are of no worth, for sacrifices are merely a way of cleansing oneself in order to serve G-d properly, but if the sacrifices are insincere, nothing has been achieved. Prayer, on the other hand, is a form of service in and of itself. Hashem desires the prayers of the righteous (see Ralbag 15:8). Hashem will punish those who deviate from the correct path of the Torah (Metzudas David 15:10). It is better to have less wealth but have earned it honestly, than to have a great fortune which has been amassed through underhand means, as the public criticism towards one who is wealthy via improper methods will be severe (Rashi 15:16). It is more important to treat the pauper with dignity than to give him more money (Rashi 15:17). It is essential to request advice from many people in order to achieve success (Metzudas David 15:22). A person should speak gently (Rashi 15:23). The righteous are wary of accepting gifts because they don't want to rely on man. They therefore receive reward from Hashem greater than any present of man (Metzudas David 15:27). The righteous contemplate what to say before opening their mouths (Rashi 15:28). Listening to constructive rebuke is key to enabling self-improvement (Metzudas David 15:31). Fearing Hashem is a prerequisite to acquiring Torah (Metzudas David 15:33).

POSSUKIM IN CONTEXT:

(טו א) מְעֵנָה רַךְ יִשְׁיב חֶמָה - A gentle reply turns away wrath

- Shlomo Hamelech is telling us that the best way to resolve a dispute is by being soft-spoken. When one responds harshly, they only increase the existing conflict, when they could really be solving it instead.
- This is a very important phrase to keep in mind whenever an argument occurs – the best solution to the problem will always be by responding in a calm manner, rather than escalating things further by retaliating.

ELUCIDATION

<p>פסוק א: מַעֲנֶה רַךְ יִשִּׁיב חַמָּה וּדְבַר-טָעֵב יַעֲלֶה-אָף:</p>	<p>“A gentle reply turns away wrath [חמה], but an infuriating word incites anger [אף].”</p> <p>Though at first glance חמה [wrath] and אף [anger] seem to be synonymous, in actuality אף refers to speech and thought which are the beginning of anger, and חמה refers to actual actions performed out of the anger. This why the first part of the פסוק says, “A gentle reply turns away חמה,” as even someone who is already speaking in an angry tone will be calmed through a gentle reply. The latter part of the verse says, “but an infuriating word incites אף,” as speaking gallingly to someone will plant the seeds of anger into someone who was not even angry at all originally.</p>
<p>פסוק ז: שִׁפְתֵי חֲכָמִים יִזְרוּ דַעַת וְלֵב כְּסִילִים לֹא-כֵן:</p>	<p>“The lips of the wise spread knowledge, but not so the heart of the fool.”</p> <p>“The lips of the wise spread knowledge.” Those who are truly wise do not just have a thirst for knowledge but also to spread it and enlighten others. “But not so the heart of the fool.” Not only does the fool not have or desire wisdom, even deep down, in his heart, he actively resists learning.</p>
<p>פסוק כג: שִׂמְחָה לְאִישׁ בְּמַעֲנֵה-פִּיו וּדְבַר בְּעִתּוֹ מֵה־טוֹב:</p>	<p>“A man has joy through the reply of his mouth, and how good is a word in its time?”</p> <p>“A man has joy through the reply of his mouth,” refers to the fact that a wise man gains enjoyment when replying to someone who asks him a question. This is because the חכם enjoys revealing the truth and enlightening others. “How good is a word in its time?” refers to the second way a wise person gains enjoyment by dispersing his wisdom. Namely, when certain times of the year arrive such as the Festivals, the חכם has to go out and teach people the laws regarding that time to ensure that the Halacha is properly kept.</p>