

## Outline

- 3:1-9 Cursing his day and his night
- 3:10-19 Death would be preferable to suffering
- 3:20-26 Why does Gd force people who suffer to remain alive?

## Introduction to 3:1-9

1. Not the only one                      Jeremiah 20:14-18

2. Ralbag, Summary of the chapter

דעת איוב היה שכל מקרי האדם הם מסודרים ומוגבלים לפי מערכת הככבים בעת הלידה ולזה קלל היום שנוולד בו לחשבו כי הוא היה סבת הרעות שקרהו וקלל ליל ההריון להיותו מורה על איכות מה שיקרה לעובר ברחם ועת צאתו מרחם... וקלל יום הלידה תחלה להיותו מורה בעצמות ראשונה על מקרי האדם בחייו וקלל ליל ההריון אחר זה להיותו מורה בשנית עליהם

Job's view was that all of a person's experiences are ordered and bounded in accordance with the arrangement of the stars at his birth. Therefore he cursed the day on which he had been born, thinking that this was the cause of the evils which had befallen him. And he cursed the night of his conception as well, because it affects the experience of the fetus in the womb, and the time of its departure from the womb... He cursed the day of birth first because it exerts the primary influence upon the events of a person's life, and then he cursed the night of conception because it exerts secondary influence upon them.

3. Michael Fishbane, *Jeremiah IV 23-26 and Job III 3-13*, *Vetus Testamentum* (April 1971)

- Bereishit 1
- Jeremiah 4:23-26
- Job 3:3-13

4. Leo Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt: Metaphorical Theology in the Book of Job*, pg. 97

With seven incantations Job attempts to destroy his arch-enemies, Day and Night, not merely the times associated with his own birth, though they are certainly included, but the very temporal structure which separates and maintains the created order... By the language of curse encapsulating the powers of primordial chaos opposing the cosmos since the beginning, Job engages in a frontal assault on creation.

## Chapter 3

5. Commentary of Malbim to Shemot 22:27

יש הבדל בין "מקלל" ובין "מארר", שהקללה הוא מציין הדבור, והוא משתתף עם קלה... שהוא הפך הכבוד, רק ש"קלל" בכפל הוא מורה בזיון יותר, ו"ארר" מציין הפעולה ששולח בו גרעון ומזיק לו בדבורו והוא הפך הברכה....

There is a distinction between קלל and ארר. קלל indicates speech, using קלה ("light")... which is the opposite of honour. It is only that קלל doubles it, indicating greater disgrace. ארר indicates action, sending reduction to the target and harming it with his speech. This is the opposite of blessing.

6. Valerie Pettys, *Let there be Darkness*, *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* (2002)

When creation is made senseless, the original design can no longer be taken seriously.

7. Commentary of Rashi to Job 3:2

"ויצעק", שכל עניייה האמורה בתורה אינה אלא לשון הרמת קול. ואב לכולם "וענו הלויים קול רם" (דברים כז:יד)  
"And he cried", for every ענה in the Torah is only a raising of one's voice. The source for all is Devarim 27:14.

8. Commentary of Rashi to Job 3:3

הלואי ויאבד היום שהייתי עתיד להולד בו ואז לא הייתי נולד

I wish that the day I would be born would be destroyed, so that I would then not be born.

9. Commentary of Metzudat David to Job 3:3

היום אשר נולדתי בו יהיה אבוד ר"ל בכל שנה כשיבוא היום ההוא יהיה בו חושך עד שיהיה אבוד ממנו שם יום:

The day I was born should be destroyed, meaning that every year, when that day comes, it should be dark, to the point that it would lose the title of "day".

10. Commentary of Rashi to Job 3:25

פחד פחדתי - כל ימי עמדתי בפחד על זה כמו שאמרנו (לעיל א) ויהי כי הקיפו וגו':

"I was very afraid" – All my life, I was occupied by this fear, as seen in Chapter 1.

11. Karen Langton, *Job's Attempt to Regain Control*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament (2012)

I suggest the author is using Job's incantation to ridicule the idea that humanity, in this case Job, could think he was in control. Job utters the birth incantation to gain control, not to destroy, but his incantation is an impossible spell.

Summary

- Three parts
  - The curse
    - A lament
    - A philosophical statement
    - A curse of destruction against Creation
  - Preference for death, and its peace
  - At least, let there be death now
- A search for control?