

## 18:5-21 Wicked people suffer

### 1. Talmud, Sanhedrin 22a

אמר רבי אלכסנדר, כל אדם שמתה אשתו בימיו - עולם חשך בעדו, שנאמר "אור חשך באהלו ונרו עליו ידעך." רבי יוסי בר חנינא אמר פסיעותיו מתקצרות, שנאמר "יצרו צעדי אונו." רבי אבהו אמר עצתו נופלת, שנאמר "ותשליכהו עצתו."

Rabbi Alexandri said: For a man whose wife dies in his lifetime, the world is dark, as it says, "The light is dark in his tent, and his lamp is cut off upon him." Rabbi Yosi bar Chanina said: His steps become small, as it says, "The steps of his strength are bounded." Rabbi Avahu said: His counsel collapses, as it says, "His counsel will cast him down."

### 2. Carol Newsom, *The Book of Job: A Contest of Moral Imaginations*, pg. 119

Read literally, 18:5-6 makes a series of banal statements about the lamp in the tent of the wicked going out. But no one versed in the conventions of Israelite poetry could take the statement literally, for "light" has traditional metaphorical resonances of "life," "vitality," "presence," and so forth... Thus, the metaphorical claim obviously has to do with the fading vitality and death of the wicked.

### 3. Ralbag, Summary of the chapter

תשכון הבהלה באהלו מפני שלא היה שלו אבל בנאו בעושק וגזל...

Confusion will live in his tent, because it was not his; he built it with corruption and theft...

### 4. Rashi to 18:14

ינתק מאהלו – מאשתו... ותצעדהו - והיא תצעדהו ותשלחהו (מעליה) לקבר, למלך השדים:

"He is separated from his tent" – his wife...

"And she walks him" – She walks him and sends him to the grave, to the king of the demons.

### 5. Carol Newsom, *The Book of Job: A Contest of Moral Imaginations*, pg. 121

The dominant figure is merismus, which expresses totality by naming paired opposites: root and branch, above and below, field and pasture, light and darkness, kin and place of sojourn, west and east (18:15-20). Thus, through the symbolic action of language is the wicked "driven out of the world" (18:18).

### 6. Ralbag, Summary of the chapter

אפשר שחטא איוב, ואם לא עשה עול, מפני שלא השתדל בשידע ד' כפי היכולת, כי זה גם כן חטא אצלו. ולזה אמר "וזה מקום לא ידע קל."

Perhaps Job sinned, even if he committed no wrong, because he did not try to know Gd to the extent of his abilities; this would also be a sin, to him. Thus he said, "This is the place of one who does not know Gd."

Bildad's First Speech (8)	Job's Reply (9-10)
Job/Job's children sinned	
There is Divine Justice and Punishment; the reed collapses One might suffer, but it can improve; the transplanted tree	Gd will not admit injustice I cannot even get a date in court! The world is run unjustly Challenges to Gd

Bildad's Second Speech (18)	Job's Reply (19)
Wicked people cause their own suffering	
The wicked lose home and family	
The wicked lack a future	

## 7. Outline of Chapter 19: The Search for Sympathy

- 19:1-4 You are making me miserable
- 19:5-12 I am surrounded and crushed
- 19:13-20 I am alone, without any aid
- 19:21-25 Please help me, by recording my words!
- 19:26-29 Frustration, and a curse for the visitors

### 18:1-4 You are making me miserable

#### 8. Ibn Ezra to 19:3

אמר הגאון רב סעדיה ז"ל בין בדברי איוב ותשובת חבריו הם עתה עשר פעמים, והנכון בעיני שהוא כמו ואפו עשר נשים בעבור היות חשבון עשרה סך חשבון:

Rav Saadia Gaon z"l said that between Job's words and his friends' words, there were ten occasions. It appears correct in my eyes to say that this is like "And ten women will bake (Vayikra 26:26)", because ten is a total.

### 19:5-12 I am surrounded and crushed

#### 9. A poem of suffering

- |       |                        |
|-------|------------------------|
| 19:5  | Crushed and surrounded |
| 19:6  | Surrounded             |
| 19:7  | Crushed                |
| 19:8  | Surrounded             |
| 19:9  | Crushed                |
| 19:10 | Surrounded             |
| 19:11 | Crushed                |
| 19:12 | Crushed and surrounded |

#### 10. Metzudat David to 19:10

עקר ממני תקותי כמו המסיע לעקור עץ אילן ממקומו אשר לא ישוב עוד למקומו לתקעו שוב כשהיה כן לא אקוה עוד לחזור לקדמותי:  
He has uprooted my hope from me, like one who uproots a tree from its place. He will not return to its place, to plant it again as it was. So I harbor no hope of returning to my earlier state.