

## 20:24-28 Gd and Man will turn against him

### 1. Midrash, Sifri Devarim 306

אמר להם משה לישראל: שמא אתם סבורים לברוח מתחת כנפי שכינה או לזוז מעל הארץ? ולא עוד אלא שהשמים כותבים שנאמר "יגלו שמים עווננו." ומנין שאף הארץ מודעת? שנאמר "וארץ מתקוממה לו."

Moshe said to Israel: Perhaps you think to flee from beneath Divine wings, or to leave the land? Further, the heavens themselves record, as it says, "The heavens will reveal his sin." And how do we know that even the land is informed (or informs)? "And the land stands against him."

## 20:29 Conclusion: This is the portion Gd sends to the wicked

### 2. Metzudat David to 20:29

הגמול הזה בעצמו הוא נחלת האיש אשר אמרתו הוא מן הא-ל, לדבר עליו שלא כהוגן ולגנות מעשיו.

This payback itself is the portion of the man whose speech is "from Gd", speaking of Him inappropriately and degrading His actions.

## Introduction to Chapter 21

Tzofar's First Speech (11)	Job's Reply (12-14)
Gd knows more, and punishes according to information that only Gd has	Gd is indeed the greatest, and source of all destruction You are misrepresenting Gd; I am the pious one
Prescription: Repent and approach Gd! Then your turmoil will end	My case against Gd: I am no sinner Paying attention to my lowly sins is not worthy of You I am here today, gone tomorrow

Tzofar's Second Speech (20)	Job's Reply (21)
Personal attacks: You and your children are being punished	
The wicked bring it upon themselves with their appetites	
Heaven and Earth turn on the wicked	

### 3. Outline of Chapter 21: The Wicked do not Suffer

- 21:1-6 Introduction: Prepare to be shocked
- 21:7-16 The wicked are not punished
- 21:17-26 Don't bring proof from cases in which wicked people suffer
- 21:27-28 Suffering is not proof of wickedness
- 21:29-34 Everyone knows that wicked people thrive

## 21:1-6 Introduction: Prepare to be shocked!

### 4. Daat Mikra to 21:2

שמעו שמעו מלתי – כנגד דברי צופר בפתיחת מענהו הקודם: "מוסר כלמתי אשמע". ואומר איוב: "אף על פי שדברי מכלימים אתכן, בבקשה מכם שמעו אותם."

"Hear my words" – Parallel to the words of Tzofar in his previous speech: "I hear the rebuke of my shame." Job says: "Even though my words shame you, please, listen to them."

### 5. Metzudat David to 21:4

וכי אנכי אדבר דברי אל אדם לשאחשוב אין דעתו עליו להשיב אמרי? הלא אל ד' אדבר! ואם כן הוא שאל ד' אדבר והוא איננו משיב לי, מדוע א"כ לא תקצר רוחי, ואיך לא אצעק במר נפשי?

Do I speak my words to Man, such that I might think that he lacks the wisdom to respond to my words? I speak to Gd!  
If it is so that I speak to Gd and He does not respond to me, why should I not be upset, and why should I not cry out with a bitter spirit?

6. Hand on mouth                      Michah 6:16; Mishlei 30:32

21:7-16                      The wicked are not punished

7. Malbim, Introduction to Chapter 21

לא כמ"ש אליפז שהרשעים מלאים פחד תמיד ואינם בוטחים בהצלחתם, כי נמצאו רשעים בוטחים ושלווים (ט' י' י"א), ולא תשובת בלדד שיכרת מינם ושאריתם המיני והאישי, כי נמצאו רשעים שבניהם חיים ומצליחים (ח'), וביתם מתקיים זמן רב (כ' - כ"ט)...

It is not as Eliphaz said, that the wicked are filled with perpetual fear and they do not trust their own success, for wicked people who are secure and at peace are to be found (21:9-11). It is not as Bildad replied, that their species and its species-wide or personal remnant will be cut off, for wicked people whose children live and thrive are to be found (21:8), and their house endures for a long time (21:20-29)...

8. Carol Newsom, The Book of Job: A Contest of Moral Imaginations, page 162

To hear it simply as parodic play with a familiar topos is not quite accurate. It misses part of Job's rhetorical strategy. Job does not begin his utterance in strict imitation of the friends. They begin with declarative statements, Job with the question "Why?" Job thus sets his speech in relation to another genre, the psalmic complaint, where objections to the prosperity of the wicked were a traditional topic (eg., Psalms 10; 73). But as with Job's evocation of the lament tradition in chapter 16, so here, too, it is employed as a setup, which depends for its effectiveness upon the expectation of a patterned sequence of ideas that Job disrupts....

9. Talmud, Sanhedrin 108a

דור המבול לא נתגאו אלא בשביל טובה שהשפיע להם הקב"ה, ומה כתיב בהם? "בתיבתם שלום מפחד ולא שבט אלוך עליהם" ... אמרו, "כלום צריכין אנו לו אלא לטיפה של גשמים? יש לנו נהרות ומעינות שאנו מסתפקין מהן!" אמר הקב"ה, "בטובה שהשפעת לי להן בה מכעיסין אותי, ובה אני דן אותם," שנאמר "ואני הנני מביא את המבול מים. (בראשית ו:17)"

The generation of the flood were arrogant only because of the good which Gd flowed upon them. And what is written regarding them? "Their house is at peace from fear, and the rod of Gd is not upon them"... They said, "Do we need Him for anything other than a drop of rain? We have rivers and streams from which we fill our needs!" Gd replied, "They anger Me with the good that I have flowed upon them, and with this I will punish them," as Bereishit 6:17 says, "And I [in response to them], behold, I will bring upon them a flood of water."