



Outline of the Book of Iyov

Chapters 1-2 The story begins by putting humanity on trial: Are human beings loyal to Gd, or only to their own perceived best interests?

Chapter 3 Iyov suffers, and responds with furious frustration

Chapters 4-26 Three rounds of debates with visitors Eliphaz, Bildad and Tzofar

Chapters 4-14 Round 1: Taking positions

Eliphaz: Gd is benevolent. Return to Gd, and Gd will embrace you

Bildad: Pain is part of growth

Tzofar: Gd has a plan

Iyov rejects their approaches

Chapters 15-21 Round 2: The punishment of the wicked

The visitors criticize Iyov more harshly, and argue that the wicked are punished

Iyov pleads for their empathy, while attacking Gd more strongly

Chapters 22-26 Round 3: Sharpening positions

Eliphaz and Bildad bring specific charges against Iyov

Iyov maintains inherently contradictory positions

Chapters 27-37 Closing speeches

Chapters 27-31 Iyov summarizes his experiences

Chapters 32-37 Elihu insists that Gd communicates and is benevolent and perfect

Chapters 38-41 Gd speaks: We cannot communicate

Chapter 42 Iyov apologize, and Gd defends and restores/rewards Iyov

Two surprises

1. Iyov 23:10-12

כי ידע דרך עמדי בקנני כנהב אצא: באשרו אהנה רגלי דרכו שמרתי ולא אט: מצות שפתיו ולא אמיש מחקי צפנתי אמרי פיו:

For He knows my way; He has tested me, and I emerged like gold. On His path my foot has set out; I have guarded His path, I will not stray. The command of His lips, I will not stray; in my path I have guarded the words of His mouth.

2. Iyov 13:23-24

כמה לי עונות וחסטאות? פשעי וחסטאתי הדיעני: למה פניך מסתיר ומתשבני לאויב לך:

How many sins and transgressions do I have? My rebellions and transgressions, inform me! Why do You hide Your face, and consider me Your enemy?

3. Iyov 16:9

אפו טרף וישטמני חרק עלי בשניו צרי ילטוש עיניו לי:

His rage struck, and He hated me. He ground His teeth upon me; my Enemy flashes His eyes upon me.

4. Iyov 13:15-16

הו יקטלני לו אנהל אף דרכי אל פניו אוכיס: גם הוא לי לישועה כי לא לפניו חנה יבוא:

Though He will kill me, yet I will trust in Him; still, I will justify my ways before Him. He will also be a source of salvation for me, for flattery will not come before Him.

## 5. Iyov 13:7-10

הלקל תדברו עולה ולו תדברו רמיה: הפניו תשאון אם-לקל תריבון: הטוב פי-יחקר אתכם אם-פהתל בפאנוש תהתלו בו: הוכח יוכיח אתכם...

Will you speak wickedly for Gd, and speak deceitfully for Him? Will you gain His favour, will you fight for Gd? Will it be good should He seek you? Or as one man deceives another, will you deceive Him? He will surely rebuke you...

## 6. Iyov 42:3-5

מי זה מעלים עצה בלי דעת לכן הגדתי ולא אבין נפלאות ממני ולא אדע: שמע נא ואנכי אדבר אשאלה והודיעני: לשמע און שמעתיך ועתה עיני ראיתיך:

Who is this who hides [Gd's] counsel without knowledge? Therefore I spoke without understanding. It was wondrous beyond me, and I did not know: "Listen now, and I will speak; I will ask of You, and You tell me." My ears had always heard of You, and now my eyes have seen You.

## 7. Iyov 42:7-8

נהי אחר דבר ד' את הדברים האלה אל איוב ויאמר ד' אל אליפז התימני חרה אפי בה ובשני רעיך כי לא דברתם אלי נכונה כעבדי איוב: ועתה קחו לכם שבעה פרים ושבעה אילים ולכו אל עבדי איוב והעליתם עולה בעדכם ואיוב עבדי יתפלל עליכם כי אם פניו אשא לבדתי עשות עמכם נבלה כי לא דברתם אלי נכונה כעבדי איוב:

And after Gd said these words to Iyov, and Gd said to Eliphaz of Teiman: My anger rages against you, and against your two friends, for you did not speak of Me properly, like My servant Iyov. And now, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, and go to My servant Iyov, and bring for yourselves a burnt offering, and Iyov My servant will pray for you, for him I will favour, so as not to act with *nevalah* upon you. For you did not speak of Me properly, like My servant Iyov.

### The Narrative

8. Carol Newsom, *The Book of Job: A Contest of Moral Imaginations*, pp. 118-125 (somewhat out of order)

Whenever I teach the book of Job, I find it almost impossible to get a class to entertain, even as a hypothetical possibility, that these poems might be true. It seems obvious that stories about the fate of the wicked are patently false. After all, the students can all name counterexamples. For myself, I do not know whether I believe the story told by the friends about the fate of the wicked is true. I do, however, think that it is one of the most complex, difficult and provocative claims made in the book, and that it is not adequately refuted in the way my students initially attempt.

Yet if such statements were intended as universal, exceptionless claims, only a deluded fool could believe them, and whatever the friends may be, they are not fools... What is at stake between Job and the friends is making evident the nature of the world, which each attempts to communicate through vivid evocations...

One cannot convince another of the truth of this perception by means of argument, for the issue is fundamentally one of perception itself. Rather, as [Raphael] Demos says, one can only "evoke" a world, a vivid pattern of a whole... The persuasive power of an iconic narrative does not derive from a simple empiricism. Although it cannot be wholly disconfirmed by experience and remain plausible, the story remains surprisingly resilient in the face of a mixture of conforming and nonconforming experience...

An example from contemporary American culture may illustrate. Consider popular business literature in which the story is told, over and over, of the individual who turns a creative idea into a flourishing business. This is the iconic narrative of entrepreneurial capitalism. Everyone knows that the large majority of new businesses fail, yet the story does not lose its power... That story is seen as expressing the nature and essence of an entrepreneurial society with all the static cleared away...

An anecdote about the success of the wicked cannot explain the reality of this world of values, which is experienced as such every day. Such things may happen, but they are perceived as anomalies, lacking explanatory power. But the story of the wicked overtaken by calamity, like the story of the restoration of the good person, rings true because it is consonant with the foundational values of the society.

### Application to Iyov

## 9. Iyov 5:17-18

הנה אשרי אנוש יוכחנו אלוך ומוסר שקי אל תמאס: כי הוא נכאיב ויחבש ימחץ וידיי תרפינה:

Fortunate is the man whom Gd rebukes; do not reject the rebuke of Shakkai! For He causes pain and bandages; He strikes, and His hands heal.

#### 10. Iyov 1:1-5

איש הָיָה בְּאֶרֶץ עוּץ וְהָיָה אִיּוֹב שְׂמוֹ וְהָיָה הָאִישׁ הַהוּא תָם וְיָשָׁר וִירָא אֱלֹקִים וְסָר מִרָע: וַיִּוְלְדוּ לוֹ שִׁבְעָה בָנִים וְשְׁלוֹשׁ בָּנוֹת: וַיְהִי מִקְנֵהוּ שִׁבְעַת אֲלָפֵי צֹאן וְשִׁלְשָׁת אֲלָפֵי גְמָלִים וְתַמְשׁ מְאוֹת צֶמֶד בָּקָר וְתַמְשׁ מְאוֹת אֲתוֹנוֹת וַעֲבָדָה רַבָּה מְאֹד וַיְהִי הָאִישׁ הַהוּא גְדוֹל מְכֹל בְּנֵי קְדָם: וְהָלְכוּ בְנָיו וַעֲשׂוּ מִשְׁתֵּה בֵּית אִישׁ יוֹמוֹ וְשָׁלְחוּ וְקָרְאוּ לְשִׁלְשַׁת אַחֵי תִיהֶם לְאֹכַל וְלִשְׁתוֹת עִמָּהֶם: וַיְהִי כִּי הִקִּיפוּ יָמֵי הַמִּשְׁתֵּה וַיִּשְׁלַח אִיּוֹב וַיִּקְדָּשׁם וְהִשְׁפִּיט בְּבִקְרָה וְהִעֲלָה עֹלוֹת מִסְפָּר כָּל־כֶּלֶם כִּי אָמַר אִיּוֹב אוֹלֵי חֲטָאוֹ בְּנֵי וּבְרַכּוּ אֱלֹקִים בְּלִבְכֶם כִּכָּה יַעֲשֶׂה אִיּוֹב כָּל הַיָּמִים:

There was a man named Iyov in Utz. The man was flawless and righteous, he revered Gd and stayed away from evil. And seven sons and three daughters were born to him. And his property included 7,000 sheep and 3,000 camels and 500 yoke of cattle and 500 donkeys and superlatively great production. The man was greater than any of those in the East. And his sons went and made a feast, each on his day in his home, and they called their three sisters to eat and drink with them. And when they completed the circuit of their feast days, Iyov sent and dedicated them, and he woke early in the morning and he brought burnt offerings in their number, for Iyov said, "Perhaps my children sinned and 'blessed' Gd in their heart." So Iyov did regularly.

#### 11. Iyov 19:25

וַאֲנִי יָדַעְתִּי גָּאֲלִי חַי וְאַחֲרוֹן עַל עַפְרָה יָקוּם:

And I know that my Redeemer lives, and He will remain standing upon the dust at the end.

#### 12. Iyov 10:3

הַטּוֹב לָךְ כִּי תַעֲשֶׂק כִּי תִמָּאֵס יִגִּיעַ כַּפִּידְךָ וְעַל עֲצַת רְשָׁעִים הוֹפְעֶתָ:

Is it good to You that You cheat and that You despise the work of Your hand, and You are manifest upon the counsel of the wicked?

#### 13. Rashi to 42:7, based on Talmud, Bava Batra 16b

הוא לא פשע בי כי אם על אשר אמר "תם ורשע הוא מכלה", "... ואם הוסיף לדבר מפני קושי יסורין אשר כבדו וחזקו עליו דבר. He did not sin against Me other than by saying, "He destroys complete and wicked"... And if he added words, he spoke because of the harsh suffering which weighed on him and overpowered him.

#### 14. Rabbi Shabtai Sabato, Rosh Yeshivat Mitzpeh Yericho, **להיות תמים** Lech Lecha 5773 (www.kiryatmoshe.co.il)

מדוע בחר משה רבנו בתואר א-ל אמונה ולא א-ל נאמן? מכאן שהמילה "אמונה" מכילה הרבה יותר. לא רק נאמנות אלא גם נתינת אמן. Why did Moshe Rabbeinu choose the description "Gd of *emunah*" and not "Gd who is *neeman*"? We see that the word *emunah* includes more – not only trustworthiness, but also trusting.