

PART 15B: CHAPTER 3, VERSES 13-16

by Rabbi Yitzchak Schwartz

Verse 13. "For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest,"

Verse 14. "with kings and counsellors of the earth, who built desolate places for themselves;"

Verse 15. "or with princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver:"

Verse 16. "or as a hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants that never saw light."

Commentary

People are divided into many different socioeconomic positions. There are kings and noblemen, men of power, strength, wealth and influence. At the bottom of the ladder are the helpless infants that die as they are born into this world. The comparison of the still born to the mighty kings and power players of society is a distressing thought. We cannot avoid feelings of pity, compassion and frustration over the condition of the unfortunate, the weak and the oppressed. The fundamental inequity of these conditions vexes our conscience.

However, these injustices trouble only the living. The dead and those who never came into existence have no concern over this painful reality. Life itself creates the environment for social inequity. The living, not the dead, are the truly unfortunate for they have to suffer the gnawing pain of these injustices. It is life that we can blame for pain and misfortune of all types. *Iyov* condemns life itself as the source of all that is bad.

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