

Jacob's Loves: Switches and Reversals

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1: Jacob's aloneness

Aviva Gottlieb Zornberg, *The Murmuring Deep*, 268-269:

The shape of Jacob's history... suggests a powerful paradox. Much married and father of many children, he lives many years single, palpably alone. His narrative conveys a sense of solitude and inwardness. More than anyone before him, he lives in a large register or turbulence, or error and reevaluation. He, alone of all the patriarchs, leaves the holy land for an extended period of time... And even when he returns, heavy with family and possessions, he is pointedly described as *levado* – *alone*: though he is married – to four wives – he has reverted to the condition of Adam before God creates his helpmate. In this condition, he struggles with a man-angel who changes his name. Then, strangely, his wives disappear from the narrative... Alone, he endures the anguish of Joseph's loss, unpartnered, he brings his children down to Egypt; and alone, he blesses them on his deathbed... Jacob' essential aloneness is palliated for a relatively brief segment of his life.

2: The first glimpse

Genesis 29:1-9

(1) Jacob resumed his journey and came to the land of the Easterners. (2) There before his eyes was a well in the open. Three flocks of sheep were lying there beside it, for the flocks were watered from that well. The stone on the mouth of the well was large. (3) When all the flocks were gathered there, the stone would be rolled from the mouth of the well and the sheep watered; then the stone would be put back in its place on the mouth of the well. (4) Jacob said to them, "My friends, where are you from?" And they said, "We are from Haran." (5) He said to them, "Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?" And they said, "Yes, we do." (6) He continued, "Is he well?" They answered, "Yes, he is; and there is his daughter Rachel, coming with the flock." (7) He said, "It is still broad daylight, too early to round up the animals; water the flock and take them to pasture." (8) But they said, "We cannot, until all the flocks are rounded up; then the stone is rolled off the mouth of the well and we water the sheep." (9) While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's flock; for she was a shepherdess.

בראשית כ"ט:א-ט

(א) וישא יעקב רגליו ויגלה ארצה בני־קדם:
 (ב) וירא והנה באר בשדה והנה שם שלשה עדר־צאן רבצים עליה כי מן־הבאר ההוא ישקו העדרים והאבן גדלה על־פי הבאר: (ג) ונאספו־שמה כל־העדרים וגללו את־האבן מעל־פי הבאר והשקו את־הצאן והשיבו את־האבן על־פי הבאר למקמה: (ד) ויאמר להם יעקב אחי מאין אתם ויאמרו מחרן אנחנו: (ה) ויאמר להם הידעתם את־לבן בן־נחור ויאמרו ידענו: (ו) ויאמר להם השלום לו ויאמרו שלום והנה רחל בתו באה עם־הצאן: (ז) ויאמר הן עוד הינם גדול לאעת האסף המקנה השקו הצאן ולכו רעו: (ח) ויאמרו לנא נוכל עד אשר יאספו כל־העדרים וגללו את־האבן מעל־פי הבאר והשקינו הצאן: (ט) עודנו מדבר עמם ורחל ו באה עם־הצאן אשר לאביה כי רעה הוא:

3: Kisses and tears

Genesis 29:10-11

(10) And when Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of his uncle Laban, and the flock of his uncle Laban, Jacob went up and rolled the stone off the mouth of the well, and watered the flock of his uncle Laban. (11) Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and broke into tears.

בראשית כ"ט:י-יא

(י) ויהי כַּאֲשֶׁר רָאָה יַעֲקֹב אֶת-רַחֵל בַּת-לָבָן אֶתִּי אִמּוֹ וְאֶת-צֹאן לָבָן אֶתִּי אִמּוֹ וַיִּגֶשׁ יַעֲקֹב וַיִּגַּל אֶת-הָאָבֶן מֵעַל פִּי הַבְּאֵר וַיִּשְׁק אֶת-צֹאן לָבָן אֶתִּי אִמּוֹ: (יא) וַיִּשְׁק יַעֲקֹב לְרַחֵל וַיִּשָּׂא אֶת-קִלְוֹ וַיִּבְהַ:

4. Rachel's silence

Genesis 24:15-29

(15) He had scarcely finished speaking, when Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel, the son of Milcah the wife of Abraham's brother Nahor, came out with her jar on her shoulder. (16) The maiden was very beautiful, a virgin whom no man had known. She went down to the spring, filled her jar, and came up.

(17) The servant ran toward her and said, "Please, let me sip a little water from your jar." (18) "Drink, my lord," she said, and she quickly lowered her jar upon her hand and let him drink. (19) When she had let him drink his fill, she said, "I will also draw for your camels, until they finish drinking." (20) Quickly emptying her jar into the trough, she ran back to the well to draw, and she drew for all his camels. ...

(23) "Pray tell me," he said, "whose daughter are you? Is there room in your father's house for us to spend the night?" (24) She replied, "I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor." (25) And she went on, "There is plenty of straw and feed at home, and also room to spend the night."...

(28) The maiden ran and told all this to her mother's household. (29) Now Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban. Laban ran out to the man at the spring—

בראשית כ"ד:ט"ו-כ"ט

(טו) וַיְהִי-הוּא טָרַם כְּלָה לְדַבֵּר וְהִנֵּה רַבְקָה יֹצֵאת אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה לְבִתּוֹאֵל בְּוַמְלֶכָה אִשְׁתִּי נַחוּר אֶתִּי אֲבִרְהָם וְכַדָּה עַל-שִׁכְמָהּ: (טז) וְהִנְעֹר טַבַּת מִרְאֵה מְאֹד בְּתוֹלָה וְאִישׁ לֹא יָדָעָה וַתֵּרֶד הָעֵינָה וַתְּמַלֵּא כַדָּה וַתַּעַל:

(יז) וַיֵּרֶץ הָעֶבֶד לְקִרְאתָהּ וַיֹּאמֶר הַגְּמִיאִינִי נָא מֵעֵט-מַיִם מִכַּדָּהּ: (יח) וַתֹּאמֶר שְׂתֵה אֲדֹנָי וַתִּמְהַר וַתֵּרֶד כַּדָּה עַל-יָדָהּ וַתִּשְׁקֶהוּ: (יט) וַתְּכַל לְהַשְׁקִתָּהּ וַתֹּאמֶר גַּם לְגַמְלֵיךָ אֲשֶׁאֵב עַד אִם-כָּלִין לְשִׁתָּת: (כ) וַתִּמְהַר וַתַּעַר כַּדָּה אֶל-הַשִּׁקָּת וַתֵּרֶץ עוֹד אֶל-הַבְּאֵר לְשֹׂאֵב וַתִּשָּׂא לְכָל-גַּמְלֵיוֹ: ...

(כג) וַיֹּאמֶר בֶּת-מִי אַתְּ הַגִּידִי נָא לִי הֵיִשׁ בֵּית-אָבִיךָ מִקּוֹם לְגוֹ לְלִינִי: (כד) וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו בֵּית-בִּתּוֹאֵל אֲנִכִּי בְּוַמְלֶכָה אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה לְנַחוּר: (כה) וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו גַּם-תִּבְנוּ גַם-מִסְפּוֹא רַב עִמָּנוּ גַם-מִקּוֹם לְלוֹן: ...

(כח) וַתֵּרֶץ הַנְּעֹר וַתַּגִּד לְבֵית אִמָּהּ כָּדָבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה: (כט) וַלְרַבְקָה אַח וַשְּׁמוֹ לָבָן וַיֵּרֶץ לָבָן אֶל-הָאִישׁ הַחוֹצֵה אֶל-הָעֵין:

5: Emotion vs Society

Bereshit Rabbah 70:12

Why did he weep? He said, "At the time that Eliezer brought Rebecca, what is written about it? 'And the servant took ten camels, etc.' But I did not take a single nose-ring, nor a single bracelet."

Another explanation: Why did he weep? As he saw that she would not be buried with him. This is [the meaning of] that which is written that she said [to Leah] (Genesis 30:15), "Hence he will lay with you tonight" - it is with you that he will die, it is not with me that he will die.

Another explanation: Why did he weep? As he saw people whispering to one another because he kissed her, "Why is this one coming to introduce a new matter of licentiousness?" As from the time that the world was struck during the generation of the flood, the nations of the world took a stand to forbid themselves licentiousness.

Genesis 29:12-20

(12) Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's kinsman, that he was Rebekah's son; and she ran and told her father. (13) On hearing the news of his sister's son Jacob, Laban ran to greet him; he embraced him and kissed him, and took him into his house. He told Laban all that had happened, (14) and Laban said to him, "You are truly my bone and flesh." When he had stayed with him a month's time, (15) Laban said to Jacob, "Just because you are a kinsman, should you serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?" (16) Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older one was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. (17) Leah had weak eyes; Rachel was shapely and beautiful. (18) Jacob **loved** Rachel; so he answered, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel." (19) Laban said, "Better that I give her to you than that I should give her to an outsider. Stay with me." (20) So Jacob served seven years for Rachel and they seemed to him but a few days because of his love for her.

בראשית כ"ט:י"ב-כ'

(יב) וַיִּגַד יַעֲקֹב לְרַחֵל כִּי אָחִי אַבְיָה הוּא וְכִי בְּוֹרְבֵקָה הָיָא וּתְרַץ וּתְגַד לְאַבְיָה: (יג) וַיְהִי כַשְׂמַלְע לְבֵן אֶת־שְׂמֵעַ וַיַּעֲקֹב בְּוֹאָחָתוֹ וַיֵּרָץ לְקִרְאָתוֹ וַיַּחֲבֹק־לוֹ וַיִּנְשָׁק־לוֹ וַיְבִיאָהּ אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ וַיִּסְפָּר לְלֵבָן אֶת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה: (יד) וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לְבָן אַךְ עֲצָמַי וּבְשָׂרִי אֶתָּה וַיֵּשֶׁב עִמּוֹ חֹדֶשׁ יָמִים: (טו) וַיֹּאמֶר לְבָן לְיַעֲקֹב הֲכִי־אָחִי אֶתָּה וְעַבְדְּתַנְּי חָנָם הַגִּידָה לִּי מַה־מְשַׁכְּרָתָה: (טז) וּלְלֵבָן שְׂתֵי בָנוֹת שָׁם הַגְּדִלָה לְאִוָּה וְשָׁם הַקְּטָנָה רַחֵל: (יז) וַעֲיָגִי לְאִוָּה רַכּוֹת וְרַחֵל הֵיטָהּ יַפְת־תֹּאֵר וַיִּפֹּת מִרְאֶה: (יח) וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶת־רַחֵל וַיֹּאמֶר אֶעֱבֹדָה שְׁבַע שָׁנִים בְּרַחֵל בְּתָהּ הַקְּטָנָה: (יט) וַיֹּאמֶר לְבָן טוֹב תַּתֵּן אֶתָּה לָּהּ מִתַּתִּי אֶתָּה לְאִישׁ אַחֵר שְׂבָה עִמָּדִי: (כ) וַיַּעֲבֹד יַעֲקֹב בְּרַחֵל שְׁבַע שָׁנִים וַיְהִי בְעֵינָיו כְּיָמִים אֶחָדִים בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ אֶתָּה:

6: Society strikes back

Genesis 29:21-30

(21) Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife, for my time is fulfilled, that I may cohabit with her.” (22) And Laban gathered all the people of the place and made a feast. (23) When evening came, he took his daughter Leah and brought her to him; and he cohabited with her... (25) When morning came, there was Leah! So he said to Laban, “What is this you have done to me? I was in your service for Rachel! Why did you deceive me?” (26) Laban said, “It is not the practice in our place to marry off the younger before the older. (27) Wait until the bridal week of this one is over and we will give you that one too, provided you serve me another seven years.” (28) Jacob did so; he waited out the bridal week of the one, and then he gave him his daughter Rachel as wife... (30) And Jacob cohabited with Rachel also; indeed, he loved Rachel more than Leah. And he served him another seven years.

בראשית כ"ט:כ"א-ל'

(כא) וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל-לָבָן הֲבֵנָה אֶת-אִשְׁתִּי כִּי מָלְאֵן יָמֵי וְאָבוֹאָהָה אֵלַיָּהּ: (כב) וַיֹּאסֶף לָבָן אֶת-כָּל-אֲנָשָׁי הַמְּקוֹם וַיַּעַשׂ מִשְׁתֵּהּ: (כג) וַיְהִי בָעֶרֶב וַיִּקַּח אֶת-לֵאָה בִּתּוֹ וַיָּבֵא אֶתָּהּ אֵלָיו וַיָּבֵא אֵלַיָּהּ... (כד) וַיְהִי בַבֹּקֶר וַהֲנִה-הוּא לֵאָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-לָבָן מַה-זֹּאת עָשִׂיתָ לִּי הֲלֹא בָרַחַל עֲבַדְתִּי עָמֹד וְלָמָּה רַמִּיתָנִי: (כו) וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה כֵן בַּמְּקוֹמֵנוּ לְתַתּ הַצְעִירָה לַפְּנֵי הַבְּכִירָה: (כז) מִלֵּא שְׁבַע זֹאת וַנִּתְּנָה לָהּ גַּם-אֶת-זֹאת בַּעֲבֹדָה אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲבֹד עִמָּדִי עוֹד שְׁבַע-שָׁנִים אַחֲרוֹת: (כח) וַיַּעַשׂ יַעֲקֹב כֵּן וַיִּמְלֵא שְׁבַע זֹאת וַיִּתְּנוּ-לוֹ אֶת-רַחֵל בִּתּוֹ לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה... (ל) וַיָּבֵא גַּם אֶל-רַחֵל וַיֶּאֱהַב גַּם-אֶת-רַחֵל מִלֵּאָה וַיַּעֲבֹד עִמָּו עוֹד שְׁבַע-שָׁנִים אַחֲרוֹת:

7: Jacob's rebellious streak

Yoram Hazoni, the Philosophy of Hebrew Scripture, 137

What could it possibly mean to say that Jacob has struggled with God and has prevailed?... It is not Esau against whom Jacob contends in his dream – if it is a dream – but God himself. **And if we think about it, we can see that Jacob's lifelong struggle with his brother Esau is indeed a struggle to resist the decrees of God himself:** After all, is it not God who put Jacob in the womb with another, and who gave Esau the strength to best him so that Jacob was second-born? Is it not God who gave Esau the character and the skill he needed to win his father's favor, so that his position as heir should come to be, in Isaac's eyes, a settled matter? To be sure, God promised Rebecca that Jacob would defeat his brother when they were yet in the womb, but from that moment on, it was as if he had abandoned him. In Hebrew Scripture there is no fate, but only decisions made by men and the decrees of the God of Israel. So these things are, in Jacob's eyes, as in the eyes of the narrative, the decrees of God. It is with God that Jacob has been wrestling his entire life... Jacob contends with God, and though God punishes him, he will not desist until he has wrung from God that blessing which was his aim all along... Jacob has won every blessing, and all this despite what appeared to be God's irreversible decree.

8: Jacob's dualities

Genesis 27:18-22

(18) He went to his father and said, “Father.” And he said, “Yes, which of my sons are you?” (19) Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau, your first-born; I have done as you told me. Pray sit up and eat of my game, that you may give me your innermost blessing.” (20) Isaac said to his son, “How did you succeed so quickly, my son?” And he said, “Because the LORD your God granted me good fortune.” (21) Isaac said to Jacob, “Come closer that I may feel you, my son—whether you are really my son Esau or not.” (22) So Jacob drew close to his father Isaac, who felt him and wondered. “The voice is the voice of Jacob, yet the hands are the hands of Esau.”

Genesis 27:42-45

(42) When the words of her older son Esau were reported to Rebekah, she sent for her younger son Jacob and said to him, “Your brother Esau is consoling himself by planning to kill you. (43) Now, my son, listen to me. Flee at once to Haran, to my brother Laban. ... (45) until your brother's anger against you subsides—and he forgets what you have done to him. Then I will fetch you from there. Let me not lose you both in one day!”

Genesis 28:1-5

(1) So Isaac sent for Jacob and blessed him. He instructed him, saying, “You shall not take a wife from among the Canaanite women. (2) Up, go to Paddan-aram, to the house of Bethuel, your mother's father, and take a wife there from among the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother, (3) May El Shaddai bless you, make you fertile and numerous, so that you become an assembly of peoples. (4) May He grant the blessing of Abraham to you and your offspring, that you may possess the land where you are sojourning, which God assigned to Abraham.” (5) Then Isaac sent Jacob off, and he went to Paddan-aram, to Laban the son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, mother of Jacob and Esau.

בראשית כ"ז:י"ח-כ"ב

(יח) ויבא אל-אביו ויאמר אבי ויאמר הנני מי אתה בני. (יט) ויאמר יעקב אל-אביו אנכי עשנו בכרה עשיתי כאשר דברת אלי קום-נא שבה ואכלה מצידו בעבור תברכני נפשה. (כ) ויאמר יצחק אל-בנו מה-זה מהרת למצא בני ויאמר פי הקרה יהנה אלהיה לפני. (כא) ויאמר יצחק אל-יעקב גשה-נא ואמשה בני האתה זה בני עשנו אם-לא. (כב) ויגש יעקב אל-יצחק אביו וימשחו ויאמר הקל קול יעקב והידיים ידני עשנו.

בראשית כ"ז:מ"ב-מ"ה

(מב) ויגד לרבקה את-דברי עשנו בנה הגדל ותשלח ותקרא ליעקב בנה הקטן ותאמר אליו הנה עשנו אחיה מתנתם לה להרגה. (מג) ועתה בני שמע בקלי וקום ברח-לה אל-לבן אחי חרנה. ... (מה) עד-שוב אף-אחיה ממך ושכח את אשר-עשית לו ושלחתי ולקחתיה משם למה אשפל גם-שניכם יום אחד.

בראשית כ"ח:א'-ה'

(א) ויקרא יצחק אל-יעקב ויברך אתו ויצוהו ויאמר לו לא-תקח אשה מבנות כנען. (ב) קום לה-פדנה ארם ביתה בתואל אבי אמך וקח-לה משם אשה מבנות לבן אחי אמך. (ג) ואל שדי-יברך אתה ויפרה וירבה והיית לקהל עמים. (ד) ויתן-לה את-ברכת אברהם לה ולזרעה אתה לרשתה את-ארץ מגר'ה אשר-נתן אלהים לאברהם. (ה) וישלח יצחק את-יעקב וילך פדנה ארם אל-לבן בן-בתואל הארמי אחי רבקה אם יעקב ועשנו.

9: A hidden presence

Bereshit Rabbah 70:19

וְכָל הַהוּא לִילְיָא הִנֵּה צֹנַח לֵה רַחֵל, וְהִיא עֲנִיָּא לִיה. בְּצַפְרָא וְהִנֵּה הִיא לֵאָה, אָמַר לֵה מָה רַמְיָתָא בֵּת רַמְאָה, לָאוּ בְּלִילְיָא הִנֵּה קַרְיָנָא רַחֵל וְאֵת עֲנִיָּת לִי. אָמְרָה לִיה אֵית סִפְרָ דְלִית לִיה תַּלְמִידִים, לֹא כַּד הָיָה צֹנַח לְךָ אַבּוּדָּה, עֲשׂוּ, וְאֵת עֲנִי לִיה.

Bava Batrah 123a:

Rather, doesn't your teacher Rabbi Yonatan say like this: It was appropriate for the child receiving the status of firstborn to emerge from Rachel, as it is written: "These are the generations of Jacob, Joseph" (Genesis 37:2), indicating that Joseph was Jacob's primary progeny. But Leah advanced ahead of Rachel with appeals for mercy, i.e., with prayer, and thereby earned the status as firstborn for her firstborn. But because of the modesty that Rachel possessed, the Holy One, Blessed be He, returned the status as firstborn to her. This is why Jacob gave the status as firstborn to Joseph.... Rav said: her eyes were literally weak, and this is not a denigration of her but a praise of her. As she would hear people at the crossroads, coming from the land of Canaan, who would say: Rebecca has two sons, and her brother Laban has two daughters; the older daughter will be married to the older son, and the younger daughter will be married to the younger son. And she would sit at the crossroads and ask: What are the deeds of the older son? The passersby would answer: He is an evil man, and he robs people. She would ask: What are the deeds of the younger son? They would answer: He is "a quiet man, dwelling in tents" (Genesis 25:27). And because she was so distraught at the prospect of marrying the evil brother, she would cry and pray for mercy until her eyelashes fell out. Since the weakness of her eyes was due to this cause, characterizing her eyes as weak constitutes praise. This is Leah's prayer for mercy to which Rabbi Yonatan referred.

10: misalignments

Genesis 30:1-13

(1) When Rachel saw that she had borne Jacob no children, she became envious of her sister; and Rachel said to Jacob, "Give me children, or I shall die." (2) Jacob was incensed at Rachel, and said, "Can I take the place of God, who has denied you fruit of the womb?" (3) She said, "Here is my maid Bilhah. Consort with her, that she may bear on my knees and that through her I too may have children." ... (8) And Rachel said, "A fateful contest I waged with my sister; yes, and I have prevailed." So she named him Naphtali. (9) When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took her maid Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as concubine... Leah said, "What luck!" So she named him Gad. (12) When Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son, (13) Leah declared, "What fortune!" meaning, "Women will deem me fortunate." So she named him Asher.

בראשית ל': א'-י"ג

(א) וַתֵּרָא רַחֵל כִּי לֹא יֵלְדָה לְיַעֲקֹב וַתִּקְנֶא רַחֵל בְּאַחֲתָהּ וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל-יַעֲקֹב הִבְהִלֵּי בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִתְּהָ אֲנֹכִי: (ב) וַיַּחֲרֵאֶרְ יַעֲקֹב בְּרַחֵל וַיֹּאמֶר הֲתַחַת אֱלֹהִים אֲנֹכִי אֲשֶׁר-מִנַּע מִמֶּנּוּ פְרִי-בֶטֶן: (ג) וַתֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה אֲמַתִּי בְלֶהָהּ כִּי אֵלֶיהָ וַתֵּלֶד עַל-בְּרַכִּי וְאִבְנָה גַם-אֲנֹכִי... (ד) וַתֹּאמֶר רַחֵל נִפְתָּלִי אֱלֹהִים וְנִפְתַּלְתִּי עַם-אַחֲתִי גַם-יִכְלָתִי וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ נִפְתָּלִי: (ט) וַתֵּרָא לֵאָה כִּי עֲמָדָה מִלְדַת וַתִּקַּח אֶת-זִלְפָּה שִׁפְחָתָהּ וַתֵּתֶן אֹתָהּ לְיַעֲקֹב לְאִשָּׁה... (יב) וַתֵּלֶד זִלְפָּה שִׁפְחַת לֵאָה בֶן שֵׁנִי לְיַעֲקֹב: (יג) וַתֹּאמֶר לֵאָה בְּאִשְׁרִי כִּי אֲשֶׁרֹנִי בְנֹת וַתִּקְרָא אֶת-שְׁמוֹ אֲשֶׁר:

11: Resolution

Genesis 33:1-5

(1) Looking up, Jacob saw Esau coming, accompanied by four hundred men. He divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and the two maids, (2) putting the maids and their children first, Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph last. (3) He himself went on ahead and bowed low to the ground seven times until he was near his brother. (4) Esau ran to greet him. He embraced him and, falling on his neck, he kissed him; and they wept. (5) Looking about, he saw the women and the children. “Who,” he asked, “are these with you?” He answered, “The children with whom God has favored your servant.”

Genesis 35:16-21

(16) They set out from Bethel; but when they were still some distance short of Ephrath, Rachel was in childbirth, and she had hard labor. (17) When her labor was at its hardest, the midwife said to her, “Have no fear, for it is another boy for you.” (18) But as she breathed her last—for she was dying—she named him Ben-oni; but his father called him Benjamin. (19) Thus Rachel died. She was buried on the road to Ephrath—now Bethlehem. (20) Over her grave Jacob set up a pillar; it is the pillar at Rachel’s grave to this day. (21) Israel journeyed on, and pitched his tent beyond Migdal-eder.

בראשית ל"ג:א-ה'

(א) וַיֵּשָׂא יַעֲקֹב עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה עֹשֹׂו בָּא וְעִמּוֹ אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת אִישׁ וַיַּחֲץ אֶת-הַיְלָדִים עַל-לְאָה וְעַל-רָחֵל וְעַל שְׁתֵּי הַשִּׁפְחוֹת: (ב) וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת-הַשִּׁפְחוֹת וְאֶת-יְלָדֵיהֶן רִאשֹׁנָה וְאֶת-לְאָה וְיְלָדֵיהָ אַחֲרָנִים וְאֶת-רָחֵל וְאֶת-יוֹסֵף אַחֲרָנִים: (ג) וְהוּא עָבַר לִפְנֵיהֶם וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אַרְצָה שֹׁבַע פְּעָמִים עַד-גִּשְׁתּוֹ עַד-אָחִיו: (ד) וַיֵּרֶץ עֹשֹׂו לְקִרְאתוֹ וַיַּחְבְּקוּהוּ וַיִּפֹּל עַל-צַוָּארָו וַיִּשְׁקְּהוּ וַיִּבְכּוּ: (ה) וַיֵּשָׂא אֶת-עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא אֶת-הַנָּשִׁים וְאֶת-הַיְלָדִים וַיֹּאמֶר מִי-אַלֶּה לָּךְ וַיֹּאמֶר הַיְלָדִים אֲשֶׁר-חָנַן אֱלֹהִים אֶת-עַבְדְּךָ:

בראשית ל"ה:ט"ז-כ"א

(טז) וַיִּסְעוּ מִבֵּית אֵל וַיְהִי-עוֹד כְּבָרַת-הָאָרֶץ לָבוֹא אֶפְרָתָה וַתֵּלֶד רָחֵל וַתִּקְשׁ בְּלִדְתָהּ: (יז) וַיְהִי בְהַקְשָׁתָהּ בְּלִדְתָהּ וַתֹּאמֶר לָהּ הַמִּיֻלָּדֵת אֶל-תִּירְאִי כִּי-גַם-יָגֵה לָךְ בֵּן: (יח) וַיְהִי בְצֵאת נַפְשָׁהּ לְכִי מֵתָה וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ בֶן-אוֹנִי וְאָבִיו קָרָא-לוֹ בְנִימִין: (יט) וַתָּמַת רָחֵל וַתִּקְבֹּר בְּדֶרֶךְ אֶפְרָתָה הוּא בֵּית לָחֶם: (כ) וַיִּצֵב יַעֲקֹב מִצְבָּה עַל-קְבֻרָתָהּ הוּא מִצְבַּת קְבֻרַת-רָחֵל עַד-הַיּוֹם: (כא) וַיִּסַּע יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֵּט אָהֳלָה מֵהָלְאָה לְמִגְדַל-עֵדֶר: