

Parsha Plug: Parshat Vayeitzei

Bereshit 29:1-14	בראשית כט:א-יד
<p><b>1</b> Now Yaakov lifted his feet and went to the land of the people of the East. <b>2</b> And he looked, and behold! a well in the field, and behold! three flocks of sheep lying beside it, because from that well they would water the flocks, and a huge rock was upon the mouth of the well. <b>3</b> And all the flocks would gather there, and they would roll the rock off the mouth of the well and water the sheep, and [then] they would return the rock onto the mouth of the well, to its place. <b>4</b> And Yaakov said to them, "My brothers, where are you from?" And they said, "We are from Haran." <b>5</b> And he said to them, "Do you know Lavan the son of Nahor?" And they said, "We know [him]." <b>6</b> And he said to them, "[Are things going] well with him?" And they said, "[Things are going] well, and behold, his daughter Rachel is coming with the sheep." <b>7</b> And he said, "The day is yet long; it is not the time to take in the livestock. Water the sheep and go, pasture." <b>8</b> And they said, "We cannot [do that], until all the flocks are gathered together, and they will roll the rock off the mouth of the well, and we shall [then] water the sheep." <b>9</b> While he was still talking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherdess. <b>10</b> And it came to pass, when Yaakov saw Rachel, the daughter of Lavan, his mother's brother and the sheep of Lavan, his mother's brother, that Yaakov drew near and rolled the rock off the mouth of the well, and he watered the sheep of Lavan, his mother's brother. <b>11</b> And Yaakov kissed Rachel, and he raised his voice and wept. <b>12</b> And Yaakov told Rachel that he was her father's kinsman and that he was Rivka's son, and she ran and told her father. <b>13</b> Now it came to pass when Lavan heard the report of Yaakov, his sister's son, that he ran towards him, and he embraced him, and he kissed him, and he brought him into his house. He told Lavan all these happenings. <b>14</b> And Lavan said to him, "Indeed, you are my bone and my flesh." And so he stayed with him a full month.</p>	<p>(א) וַיִּשָׂא יַעֲקֹב רַגְלָיו וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶרְצָה בְּנִי־קָדָם: (ב) וַיִּרְא וְהִנֵּה בְּאֵר בְּשֵׂדֶה וְהִנֵּה־יֵשֶׁם שְׁלֹשָׁה עֲדָרֵי־צֹאן רֹבְצִים עָלֶיהָ כִּי מִן־הַבְּאֵר הָיָהוּ יֹשְׁקוּ הָעֲדָרִים וְהָאֶבֶן גְּדֹלָה עַל־פִּי הַבְּאֵר: (ג) וַנֹּאסְפוּ־שָׂמָּה כָּל־הָעֲדָרִים וַיְגַלְלוּ אֶת־הָאֶבֶן מֵעַל פִּי הַבְּאֵר וְהִשְׁקוּ אֶת־הַצֹּאן וְהִשְׁיבוּ אֶת־הָאֶבֶן עַל־פִּי הַבְּאֵר לְמִקְוָהּ: (ד) וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם יַעֲקֹב אַחֵי מֵאֵין אַתֶּם וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִחָרָן אֲנַחְנוּ: (ה) וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם הֲיִדְעֶתֶם אֶת־לָבָן בֶּן־נָחוֹר וַיֹּאמְרוּ יָדַעְנוּ: (ו) וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם הַשְּׁלוֹם לוֹ וַיֹּאמְרוּ שְׁלוֹם וְהִנֵּה רָחֵל בָּתּוֹ בָּאָה עִם־הַצֹּאן: (ז) וַיֹּאמֶר הֵן עוֹד הַיּוֹם גְּדוֹל לֹא־עֵת הָאֶסֶף הַמְקַנֶּה הַשְּׁקוּ הַצֹּאן וּלְכוּ רְעוּ: (ח) וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא נוּכַל עַד אֲשֶׁר יֹאסְפוּ כָּל־הָעֲדָרִים וַיְגַלְלוּ אֶת־הָאֶבֶן מֵעַל פִּי הַבְּאֵר וְהִשְׁקִינוּ הַצֹּאן: (ט) עוֹדֵנוּ מְדַבֵּר עִמָּם וְרָחֵל בָּאָה עִם־הַצֹּאן אֲשֶׁר לְאֵבִיהָ כִּי רָעָה הוּא: (י) וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר רָאָה יַעֲקֹב אֶת־רָחֵל בַּת־לָבָן אֵחָיו וְאֶת־צֹאן לָבָן אֵחָיו אָמֹן וַיֵּגֶשׂ יַעֲקֹב וַיְגַל אֶת־הָאֶבֶן מֵעַל פִּי הַבְּאֵר וַיִּשְׁק אֶת־צֹאן לָבָן אֵחָיו אָמֹן: (יא) וַיִּשְׁק יַעֲקֹב לְרָחֵל וַיִּשָּׂא אֶת־קֶלְוֹ וַיִּבֶךְ: (יב) וַיֵּגֵד יַעֲקֹב לְרָחֵל כִּי אֵחָיו אָבִיהָ הוּא וְכִי בְּרִבְכָּהּ הָיָה וַתֵּרֶץ וַתֵּגֵד לְאֵבִיהָ: (יג) וַיְהִי כַשְּׂמַע לָבָן אֶת־שְׂמֵעוֹ יַעֲקֹב בְּרִאחוֹתָיו וַיֵּרֶץ לְקִרְאתוֹ וַיַּחְבֵּק־לוֹ וַיִּנְשָׁק־לוֹ וַיְבִיֵּאֵהוּ אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ וַיִּסְפֹּר לְלָבָן אֶת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה: (יד) וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לָבָן אַךְ עַצְמִי וּבָשָׂרִי אֶתָּה וַיָּשֶׁב עִמּוֹ חֹדֶשׁ יָמִים:</p>

Shemot Rabbah on Shemot 1:32	שמות רבה (וילנא) שמות א:לב
<p>Three found their spouses at a well: Yitzchak, Yaakov, and Moshe. For Yitzchak it is written, 'Yitzchak came from the way of the well of Le'Chai-Roi.' Furthermore, Rivka had met Eliezer at a well. For Yaakov: 'And he</p>	<p>שלשה נזדווגו להם זווגיהם מן הבאר, יצחק, יעקב ומשה, ביצחק כתיב (בראשית כד) ויצחק בא מבוא באר וגו', ועוד שנזדווגה רבקה לאליעזר למעין, יעקב (שם כט) וירא</p>

saw, behold, a well in the field'. For Moshe: 'And he sat at the well'.	והנה באר בשדה, משה וישב על הבאר.
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<b>Shemot Rabbah Parshat Shemot 2,2</b>	<b>שמות רבה (וילנא) פרשת שמות ב,ב</b>
God said, "Whoever knows how to look after sheep, bestowing upon each the care it deserves will come and tend my people".	אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא מי שהוא יודע לרעות הצאן איש לפי כחו יבא וירעה בעמי.

<b>Masechet Megillah 13b</b>	<b>מסכת מגילה יג:</b>
<p>What was the modesty displayed by Rachel? As it is written: "And Yaakov told Rachel that he was her father's brother" (Genesis 29:12). Now was he her father's brother? Was he not the son of her father's sister? Rather he said to her, 'Will you marry me?' She replied, 'Yes, but my father is a trickster, and you cannot outwit him'. He replied: 'I am his brother in trickery'. She said to him: 'Is it permitted to the righteous to engage in trickery?' He replied: 'Yes; "With the pure, act in purity and with the perverse, act wily"'. He said to her: 'What is his trickery?' She replied: 'I have a sister older than me, and he will not let me marry before her'. So he gave her certain tokens. When night came, she said to herself, 'Now my sister will be put to shame'. So she handed over the tokens to her. So it is written, "And it came to pass in the morning that, behold, it was Leah." Up to now she was not Leah? Rather, what it means is that on account of the tokens which Rachel gave to Leah he did not know until then. Therefore she was rewarded by having Shaul among her descendants.</p>	<p>ומאי צניעות היתה בה ברחל דכתיב (בראשית כט, יב) ויגד יעקב לרחל כי אחי אביה הוא וכי אחי אביה הוא והלא בן אחות אביה הוא אלא אמר לה מינסבא לי אמרה ליה אין מיהו אבא רמאה הוא ולא יכלת ליה אמר לה אחיו אנא ברמאות אמרה ליה ומי שרי לצדיקי לסגויי ברמיותא אמר לה אין (שמאל ב כב, כז) עם נבר תתבר ועם עקש תתפל אמר לה ומאי רמיותא אמרה ליה אית לי אחתא דקשישא מינאי ולא מנסיב לי מקמה מסר לה סימנים כי מטא ליליא אמרה השתא מיכספא אחתאי מסרתינהו ניהלה והיינו דכתיב (בראשית כט, כה) ויהי בבקר והנה היא לאה מכלל דעד השתא לאו לאה היא אלא מתוך סימנין שמסרה רחל ללאה לא הוה ידע עד השתא לפיכך זכתה ויצא ממנה שאול.</p>

<b>Eicha Rabbah Peticha 24</b>	<b>איכה רבה (וילנא) פתיחות: כד</b>
<p>Rachel said, "Master of the Universe! It is known before You that Your servant Yaakov's love for me knew no bounds, and he worked for my father for seven years for me. When those seven years were completed and the time came for my marriage to my husband, my father advised exchanging me with my sister. This was exceedingly difficult for me...[but] I acted kindly with her, I was not jealous of her, and I did not cause her to be shamed and disgraced. What am I, flesh and blood, dust and ashes, that I was not jealous of my rival wife,</p>	<p>אמרה רבש"ע גלוי לפניך שיעקב עבדך אהבני אהבה יתירה ועבד בשבילי לאבא שבע שנים וכשהשלימו אותן שבע שנים והגיע זמן נשואי לבעלי יעץ אבי להחליפני לבעלי בשביל אחותי והוקשה עלי הדבר...וגמלתי חסד עמה, ולא קנאתי בה ולא הוצאתיה לחרפה, ומה אני שאני בשר ודם עפר ואפר לא קנאתי</p>

<p>and that I did not allow her to be shamed and disgraced, but You, merciful living and eternal King, why were You jealous of idolatry that is of no import, and exiled my children who were slain by the sword, and allowed their enemies to do with them as they pleased?" God's mercy was immediately revealed, and He said: "For your sake, Rachel, I shall return Israel to their place—for there is a reward for your labor [...]. And there is hope for your future—declares the Lord: Your children shall return to their country.</p>	<p>לצרה שלי ולא הוצאתיה לבושה ולחרפה, ואתה מלך חי וקיים רחמן מפני מה קנאת לעבודת כוכבים שאין בה ממש והגלית בני ונהרגו בחרב ועשו אויבים בם כרצונם, מיד נתגלגלו רחמיו של הקדוש ברוך הוא ואמר בשבילך רחל אני מחזיר את ישראל למקומן...כי יש שכר לפעולתך...ושבו בנים לגבולם.</p>
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**Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, *Parshat Vayetse 5775: Love Is Not Enough***

Judaism is a religion of love. It is so for profound theological reasons. In the world of myth the gods were at worst hostile, at best indifferent to humankind. In contemporary atheism the universe and life exist for no reason whatsoever. We are accidents of matter, the result of blind chance and natural selection. Judaism's approach is the most beautiful I know. We are here because God created us in love and forgiveness asking us to love and forgive others. Love, God's love, is implicit in our very being. So many of our texts express that love: the paragraph before the Shema with its talk of "great" and "eternal love." The Shema itself with its command of love. The priestly blessings to be uttered in love. *Shir ha-Shirim*, The Song of Songs, the great poem of love. Shlomo Albaketz's *Lecha dodi*, "Come, my Beloved," Eliezer Azikri's *Yedid nefesh*, "Beloved of the soul." If you want to live well, love. If you seek to be close to God, love. If you want your home to be filled with the light of the Divine presence, love. Love is where God lives. But love is not enough. You cannot build a family, let alone a society, on love alone. For that you need justice also. Love is partial, justice is impartial. Love is particular, justice is universal. Love is for this person not that, but justice is for all. Much of the moral life is generated by this tension between love and justice. It is no accident that this is the theme of many of the narratives of Genesis. Genesis is about people and their relationships while the rest of the Torah is predominantly about society.

Tefilat Geshem	תפלת גשם
<p>Remember the one [Yaakov] who carried his staff and crossed the Jordan's water. He dedicated his heart and rolled a stone off the mouth of a well of water, as when he was wrestled by an angel composed of fire and water. Therefore You pledged to remain with him through fire and water. For his sake, do not hold water back!</p>	<p>זכור טען מקלו ועבר ירדן מים יחד לב וגל אבן מפני באר מים, כנאבק לו שר בלול מאש וממים, לכן הבטחתו היות עמו באש ובמים. בעבורו אל תמנע מים.</p>