

Parsha Plug: Vayishlach

Bereshit 35:1-15	בראשית לה: א-טו
<p>1And God said to Yaakov, "Arise and go up to Beit El and abide there, and make there an altar to the God Who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esav." 2Thereupon Yaakov said to his household and to all those who were with him, "Remove the deities of the foreign nations, which are in your midst, purify yourselves and change your clothes. 3And we will arise and go up to Beit El, and I will make an altar to the God Who answered me on the day of my distress, and was with me on the way that I went." 4And they gave Yaakov all the deities of the nations that were in their possession and the earrings that were in their ears, and Yaakov hid them under the terebinth that was near Shechem. 5Then they traveled, and the fear of God was upon the cities that were around them, so that they did not pursue Yaakov's sons. 6And Yaakov came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan that is Beit El he and all the people who were with him. 7He built there an altar, and he called the place El Beit El, for there God had been revealed to him when he fled from before his brother Esav. 8And Devorah, Rivka's nurse, died, and she was buried beneath Beit El, beneath the oak; so he named it Alon-bachut. 9And God appeared again to Yaakov when he came from Padan Aram, and He blessed him. 10God said to him, "Your name is Yaakov. Your name shall no longer be called Yaakov, but Yisrael shall be your name." And He named him Yisrael. 11And God said to him, "I am the Almighty God; be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a multitude of nations shall come into existence from you, and kings shall come forth from your loins. 12And the land that I gave to Avraham and to Yitzchak, I will give to you and to your seed after you will I give the land." 13And God went up from him in the place where He had spoken with him. 14Now Yaakov had erected a monument in the place where He had spoken with him, a stone monument, and he poured a libation upon it, and [then] he poured oil upon it. 15Yaakov named the place where God had spoken with him Beit El.</p>	<p>(א) וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים אֶל-יַעֲקֹב קוּם עֲלֵה בֵּית־קֵל וְשָׁב־שָׁם וַעֲשֵׂה־שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לְקַל הַנִּרְאָה אֵלֶיךָ בְּבִרְחֶךָ מִפְּנֵי עֵשָׂו אָחִיךָ: (ב) וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל-בֵּיתוֹ וְאֶל כָּל-אֲשֶׁר עִמּוֹ הִסְרוּ אֶת־אֱלֹהֵי הַנֹּכַר אֲשֶׁר בְּתִכְכֶּם וְהִטְהֵרוּ וְהִחְלִיפוּ שְׂמֹלֹתֵיכֶם: (ג) וְנָקוּמָה וְנַעֲלֵה בֵּית־קֵל וְאֶעֱשֵׂה־שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לְקַל הָעֲנָה אֵתִי בַּיּוֹם צָרָתִי וַיְהִי עֲמָדִי בַּדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר הִלַּכְתִּי: (ד) וַיִּתְּנוּ אֶל־יַעֲקֹב בְּאֵת כָּל־אֱלֹהֵי הַנֹּכַר אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדָם וְאֶת־הַנְּזָמִים אֲשֶׁר בְּאָזְנֵיהֶם וַיִּטְמֵן אֹתָם יַעֲקֹב תַּחַת הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר עַם־שָׁכָם: (ה) וַיִּסְעוּ וַיְהִיו חֲתַת אֱלֹקִים עַל־הָעָרִים אֲשֶׁר סָבִיבוֹתֵיהֶם וְלֹא רָדְפוּ אַחֲרָי בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב: (ו) וַיָּבֹא יַעֲקֹב לִיְזֵה אֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרֶץ פְּנֵעַן הוּא בֵּית־קֵל הוּא וְכָל־הָעָם אֲשֶׁר־עִמּוֹ: (ז) וַיָּבֹן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ וַיִּקְרָא לַמָּקוֹם קַל בֵּית־קֵל כִּי שָׁם נִגְלוּ אֵלָיו הָאֱלֹקִים בְּבִרְחוֹ מִפְּנֵי אָחִיו: (ח) וַתָּמָת דְּבָרָה מִיָּנִיקַת רִבְקָה וַתִּקָּבֵר מִתַּחַת לְבֵית־קַל תַּחַת הָאֵלֹון וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ אֵלֹון בְּכֹות: פ (ט) וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹקִים אֶל־יַעֲקֹב עוֹד בְּבֹאוֹ מִפָּדָן אֲרָם וַיְבָרֶךְ אוֹתוֹ: (י) וַיֹּאמְרוּ־לּוֹ אֱלֹקִים שְׁמֶךָ יַעֲקֹב לֹא־יִקְרָא שְׁמֶךָ עוֹד יַעֲקֹב כִּי אִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל יִהְיֶה שְׁמֶךָ וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל: (יא) וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֱלֹקִים אֲנִי קַל שִׁדְדִי פְרָה וְרִבְיָה גוֹי וְקָהַל גּוֹיִם יִהְיֶה מִמֶּךָ וּמִלְכִּים מִחֻלָּצִין יֵצְאוּ: (יב) וְאֶת־הָאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְאַבְרָהָם וְלִיִּצְחָק לָךְ אֶתְנַנֶּה וְלִזְרַעְךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ אֶתֶּן אֶת־הָאֶרֶץ: (יג) וַיַּעַל מֵעֵלְיוֹ אֱלֹקִים בְּמָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־דָּבָר אוֹתוֹ: (יד) וַיַּצֵּב יַעֲקֹב מִצְבֵּה בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־דָּבָר אוֹתוֹ מִצְבֵּה אֶבֶן וַיִּסֹּךְ עָלֶיהָ נֶסֶךְ וַיִּצֹק עָלֶיהָ שֶׁמֶן: (טו) וַיִּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב אֶת־שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם וְאֵשֶׁר דָּבָר אוֹתוֹ שֵׁם אֱלֹקִים בֵּית־קֵל:</p>

Malbim on Bereshit 35:8	מלבי"ם בראשית לה:ח
<p>And Devorah died: It is well known that she was a righteous woman...She merited to die after the purifying</p>	<p>(ח) ותמת דברה. מודיע שהיתה צדקת...זכתה למות אחרי הטהרה</p>

that is said and the service of God and to be buried in the holy place of Beit El where God revealed His Presence.	האמורה ועבודת ה' ולהקבר במקום קדוש בבית קל, אשר נגלו שם האלקים.
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<b>Seforno on Bereshit 35:8</b>	<b>ספורנו בראשית לה:ח</b>
Weeping oak: Mourning results in the withdrawal of the Divine Presence. Until Yaakov had passed this tree after mourning Devorah, the Divine Presence did not return and accompany him, for as it is said, "The Shechinah does not rest in the midst of sorrow" (Shabbat 30b).	אלון בכות. וזה הפסיק הגלות השכינה כאמרם רז"ל שאין השכינה שורה מתוך עצבות (שבת ל ב):

<b>Midrash Aggadah (Buber) on Bereshit 35:8</b>	<b>מדרש אגדה (בובר) בראשית לה:ח</b>
The nurse of Rivka: The mother of Rivka.	מינקת רבקה. אמה של רבקה:

<b>Ramban on Bereshit 35:8</b>	<b>רמב"ן בראשית לה:ח</b>
<p>[1] The rabbis teach that this verse hints at the death of Rivka, and therefore Yaakov called the place Alon-bachut (the oak of weeping) for the weeping and anguish could not have been such for the passing of the old nurse that the place would have been named on account of it. Instead, Yaakov wept and mourned for his righteous mother who had loved him and sent him to Padan Aram and who was not privileged to see him when he returned. Therefore God appeared to him and blessed him in order to comfort him, just as He did for his father Yitzchak when Avraham died. With reference to both of them, the Sages have said that He gave them the blessing of consolation addressed to mourners. Proof for this is what follows later when the text says, "And Yaakov came to Yitzchak his father to Mamre". For had Rivka been there the text would have say "to his father and his mother" for it was she who sent him to Padan Aram in the first place and caused him all of the good, for Yitzchak sent Yaakov there at her advice...[The Midrash teaches that Rivka was buried at night "because of Esav, so that people should not say this and that about the womb from which a man like Esav was born"; and so] the Torah mentions her death only indirectly. It is this which the Torah says, "And he called its name Alon-bachut, two weepings" [one for Devorah and one for Rivka]...[2] Devorah was with Yaakov because after accompanying Rivka to Canaan, she had returned to her country, and now she was coming with Yaakov in order to see her mistress. It may be</p>	<p>והקרוב מה שאמרו רבותינו (ב"ר פא ה) שירמוז למיתת רבקה, ולכן קרא שם המקום ההוא אלון בכות, כי אין בכי ואנקה על המינקת הזקנה שיקרא שם המקום עליו. אבל יעקב בכה והתאבל על אמו הצדקת אשר אהבתה, ושלחה אותו שם ולא זכתה לראותו בשובו, ולכן נגלה אליו האלקים וברך אותו לנחמו כאשר עשה ליצחק אביו אחרי מות אברהם (לעיל כה יא). ובשניהם אמרו חכמים (סוטה יד א) ברכת אבליהם ברכו. וסיוע לזה מה שאמור למטה (פסוק כז) ויבא יעקב אל יצחק אביו ממרא קרית הארבע, ואלו היתה רבקה שם היה מזכיר "אל אביו ואל אמו", כי היא השולחת אותו שם והגורמת לו כל הטובה, ויצחק בעצתה צוה אותו ללכת שם...לפי שהוציאו מטתה בלילה לא פרשו הכתובים מיתתה אלא מן הצד, הדא הוא דכתיב ויקרא שמו אלון בכות, שתי בכיות...והיתה דבורה עם יעקב, כי אחרי שבאה עם רבקה שבה לארצה, ועתה תבא עם יעקב לראות גברתה. או נתעסקה בגדול בני יעקב</p>

that she was engaged in raising Yaakov's children out of respect for Rivka and due to her love for her, and thus she resided with him. [3] Now it is possible that this is not the same nurse of whom it is said "And they sent away Rivka their sister and her nurse" but that she was another nurse who remained in the house of Lavan and Betuel and now Yaakov brought her with him to support her in her old age out of respect to his mother, since it was the custom for notables to have many nurses. [4] It's improbable that the old woman would be the messenger that Rivka dispatched to Yaakov (as Moshe HaDarshan [and the Midrash and Rashi] say).	לכבוד רבקה ולאהבתה והיתה בביתו. ויתכן שאינה היא המינקת שנאמר בה (לעיל כד נט) וישלחו את רבקה אחותם ואת מינקתה, אבל היתה מינקת אחרת שנשארה בבית לבן ובתואל, ועתה יביא אותה יעקב עמו לכלכל את שיבתה לכבוד אמו, כי כן דרך הנכבדים להיות להם מיניקות רבות, כי רחוק הוא שתהיה הזקנה השליח שתשלח אמו ליעקב כדברי רבי משה הדרשן:
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Daat Zekeinim on Bereshit 35:8	דעת זקנים בראשית לה:ח
And Devorah died: What is written about Devorah the prophetess is that she sat under the palm of Devorah, and this refers to the weeping oak (Alon-bachut) of this Devorah here. ["She used to sit under the palm of Devorah between Ramah and Bet El in the hill country of Efraim and the Israelites would come to her for decisions" Shoftim 4:5]	ותמת דבורה. מדרש כי מה שכתוב גבי דבורה הנביאה 'והיא יושבת תחת תמר דבורה' זהו אלון בכות דבורה דהכא: [וְהָיָא יוֹשֶׁבֶת תַּחַת־תֶּמֶר דְּבוֹרָה בֵּין הָרָמָה וּבֵין בֵּית־אֵל בְּהַר אֶפְרַיִם וַיֵּעָלוּ אֵלֶיהָ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִשְׁפָּט:]

Rabbi David Silverberg, <i>Devorah the Nursemaid and Devorah the Prophetess</i>
Why would the Midrash draw such an association between Devorah the nursemaid and Devorah the prophetess? Perhaps the answer lies particularly in the stark contrast between these two personalities. Devorah the prophetess was a woman of wealth, prominence, leadership, and, of course, spiritual insight. In fact, Rashi, in his comments to the aforementioned verse in Sefer Shoftim, interprets that verse as a reference to Devorah's vast holdings in the palm-rich region of Jericho and other areas. And in the following verse, she summons Barak, the nation's military general, and orders him to launch an offensive against the Canaanites. This woman of power and authority contrasts sharply with Devorah the nursemaid, whose most prominent feature appears to be her anonymity...For this very reason, perhaps, the Midrash draws a connection between these two women. As prominent and influential as Devorah the prophetess was, she nevertheless "sat under the Palm of Devorah" the nursemaid. She made a point of retaining a soft, gentle, humble demeanor, even as she took the reins of leadership in an attempt to restore stability to an anarchy-stricken nation. She found the way of being both a "nevi'a" (prophetess) and a "meinekhet" (nursemaid) - a woman of intellect and authority on the one hand, and, on the other, of simplicity, sensitivity and compassion.

Shadal on Bereshit 35:8	שדל בראשית לה:ח
<p>The purpose of this story is to teach us proper etiquette to honor the nursemaid who exerts effort in raising the suckling infant – even after he has been raised, especially this one, who left her land and father’s home to go with Rivka. Thus the crying and the naming of the place.</p>	<p>ואמנם התועלת בספור הזה ללמדנו מדה טובה לכבד גם המינקת המשתדלת בגידול היונק גם אחר שגדל, ובפרט זאת שיצאה מארצה ומבית אביה ללכת עם רבקה, והנה הבכיה וקריאת שם המקום.</p>

Rabbi David Silverberg, <i>The Death of Devorah, Rivka’s Nursemaid</i>
<p>It is also worth emphasizing that this incident transpired at Beit-El, immediately after Yaakov’s building of an altar at the site, and just prior to the prophecy he received. Rav Shimshon Refael Hirsch briefly notes a number of parallels between Yaakov’s pilgrimage to Beit-El and the Revelation at Sinai, and concludes that the events in Beit-El in fact served for Yaakov and his family as a kind of Ma’amad Har Sinai. Significantly, it is during this event that Yaakov must take the time to give honor and respect to Devorah. This verse might underscore the importance of not losing sight of one’s basic moral duties amidst his involvement in lofty, spiritual pursuits. Even during his personal “Ma’amad Har Sinai,” Yaakov did not neglect his mother’s loyal nurse, and he afforded her the respect she deserved. He understood that spiritual experiences such as the events at Beit-El must enhance a person’s commitment to proper ethical conduct, not lead him to neglect it.</p>