

# CHANUKAH: THE EFFECT OF OUTSIDE INFLUENCE

## Background

Yaakov is now running from Aysav. He experiences something supernatural – he sees a vision of a ladder with angels climbing up and down it. He recognizes this as a divine revelation and understands that HASHEM is promising him protection. At this point, he asks HASHEM for a number of things. One of them is for HASHEM to protect him so that he shouldn't learn from the ways of Lavan.

## Questions

What are the odds that a man like Yaakov Avinu would be affected by the ways of Lavan? Lavan was devious and deceitful, the exact opposite of Yaakov Avinu – a man of truth. Yaakov was the victim of Lavan's deceitfulness. He was duped and defrauded by Lavan many times. But even more so, Yaakov Avinu is now 77 years of age. A full *tzaddik*, he spent his early years in the tent of his father learning and perfecting himself and has just now returned from an additional fourteen years of intense learning and spiritual development.

Why would a man of his stature be afraid of learning from the ways of Lavan?

### ספר בראשית פרק כח

(כ) וַיֵּדֶר יַעֲקֹב נֶדֶר לְאִמּוֹ  
אֵם יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים עַמְדֵי  
וּשְׁמֵרֵנִי בַדֶּרֶךְ הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר  
אָנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ וְנָתַן לִי לֶחֶם  
לְאָכַל וּבִגְד לְלַבֵּשׁ

(כא) וְשָׁבְתִי בְשָׁלוֹם אֶל  
בֵּית אָבִי וְהָיָה יְדוּד לִי  
לְאֱלֹהִים

(כב) וְהֶאֱבֹן הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר  
שָׁמַתִּי מִצִּבְיָה יְהוָה בְּיַת  
אֱלֹהִים וְכָל אֲשֶׁר תִּתֶּן לִי  
עֲשֵׂר אֶעֱשֶׂרְנוּ לָךְ

*And Yaakov made a vow saying, "If HASHEM will be with me, will guard me in my way and will give me food to eat and clothing to wear, and will bring me back in peace from Lavan's house. . ."*

### רש"י על בראשית פרק כח פסוק כא

**בשלום** - שלם מן החטא  
שלא אלמד מדרכי לבן

**In peace** - *From the word complete, as in complete from sin; he should not learn from the ways of Lavan.*