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| **The Bracha of the Longer Route**By Yair Shloush |

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| “״ויצא יעקב מבאר שבע וילך חרנה. This week’s parsha opens with יעקב fleeing the wrath of עשו and heading towards his uncle’s house in חרן. On his way, יעקב stops at a place, which רשי says is הר המוריה. There he has his famous dream in which Hashem promises to keep him safe and return him safely. The next day he continues his journey and, according to תרגום יונתן בן עוזיאל, is granted by Hashem  קפיצת הדרך enabling him to arrive that same day!  The כלי יקר points out that this is the only time  יעקבhad a קפיצת הדרך for the rest of his life. The אור החיים הקדוש asks later in the parsha, when יעקב is running away from לבן why doesn’t Hashem grant Yaakov aקפיצת הדרך and help him avoid Lavan altogether? Even more troublesome; אליעזר עבד אברהם had קפיצת הדרך both when he went to find a wife for Yitzchak and when he returned! So why did Yaakov, the Grandson of Avraham, who is worthy of such a miracle, only get it on his way to Charan and not on the way back?!  The אור החיים suggests that the reason why Hashem didn’t shorten the path for him in this specific instance, is because Hashem wanted to show יעקב that he’d be safe even if לבן caught up to him. Had Hashem shortened the path, it would result in a tremendous ‘חילול ה! It might ח״ו seem that Hashem couldn’t protect יעקב from לבן so He resorted to shortening the way. There may be another possible answer based on the ספרנו at the end of the parsha, as to why Hashem didn’t preform קפיצת הדרך for יעקב. After catching up to יעקב and his family, לבן and יעקב had an argument, resulting in a peace treaty. On his way out לבן gave his children and grandchildren a departing ברכה. The ספרנו explains the power of this ברכה which לבן gave was with all his soul. When a father gives his children a ברכה with his entire soul, the צלם אלוקים inside him comes out and adds significant power to the ברכה. The צלם אלוקים is the essence of a person, therefore what לבן was giving the ברכה with his entire essence. This is the power of a father’s ברכה. Maybe this is why Hashem didn’t give Yaakov קפיצת הדרך because if He had, then יעקב and his family would have lost out on this special ברכה from their grandfather which may have protected them in many future circumstances. |

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