

# The Torah Project

Genesis 31b-32a

Genesis 31:28

“...You have acted **foolishly**.”

שָׂכַל (sachal)  
↓ (shin)

“to be prudent”

סָכַל (Samech)  
↓ (Samech)

“to be foolish”

## Anatomy of a Fool

**Proverbs 12:15** The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man is he who listens to counsel.

**Proverbs 12:16** A fool's anger is known at once, but a prudent man conceals dishonor.

**Proverbs 12:23** A prudent man conceals knowledge, but the heart of fools proclaims folly.

**Proverbs 13:16** Every prudent man acts with knowledge, but a fool displays folly.

**Proverbs 14:3** In the mouth of the foolish is a rod for *his* back, but the lips of the wise will protect them.

**Proverbs 17:12** Let a man meet a bear robbed of her cubs, rather than a fool in his folly.

**Proverbs 17:24** Wisdom is in the presence of the one who has understanding, but the eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth.

**Proverbs 18:2** A fool does not delight in understanding, but only in revealing his own mind.

**Proverbs 18:6** A fool's lips bring strife, and his mouth calls for blows.

**Proverbs 20:3** Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man, but any fool will quarrel.

**Proverbs 26:11** Like a dog that returns to its vomit Is a fool who repeats his folly.

## A fool:

- **Uses a lot of words** (To show off knowledge)
- **Gives subjective views** (No unbiased thinking)
- **Often talks about himself** (Uses a lot I's)
- **Boasts to impress** (I did this/that)
- **Stubborn** (No grey areas)
- **Feels Superior** (Does not tolerate other viewpoints)
- **Never admits ignorance** (Knows everything)
- **Flaunts his ambitions** (I am going to do this/that)
- **Takes credit for others' accomplishments** (It couldn't have been done without me!)

*Ego = ("I")*

***There is no correct way to answer a fool.***

### **Proverbs 26:4-5**

- 4 - *Do not answer*** a fool according to his folly, lest you also become like him.
- 5 - *Answer*** a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.

***So, what do we do?***

### **Proverbs 14:7**

Leave the presence of a fool, or you will not discern words of knowledge.

***Even a wise man sometimes feels like a fool.  
But, a fool never feels like a fool.  
He only feels angry.***

## Proverbs 22:15

Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the **rod of discipline** will remove it far from him.

שבט מוסר

(*shevet musar*)

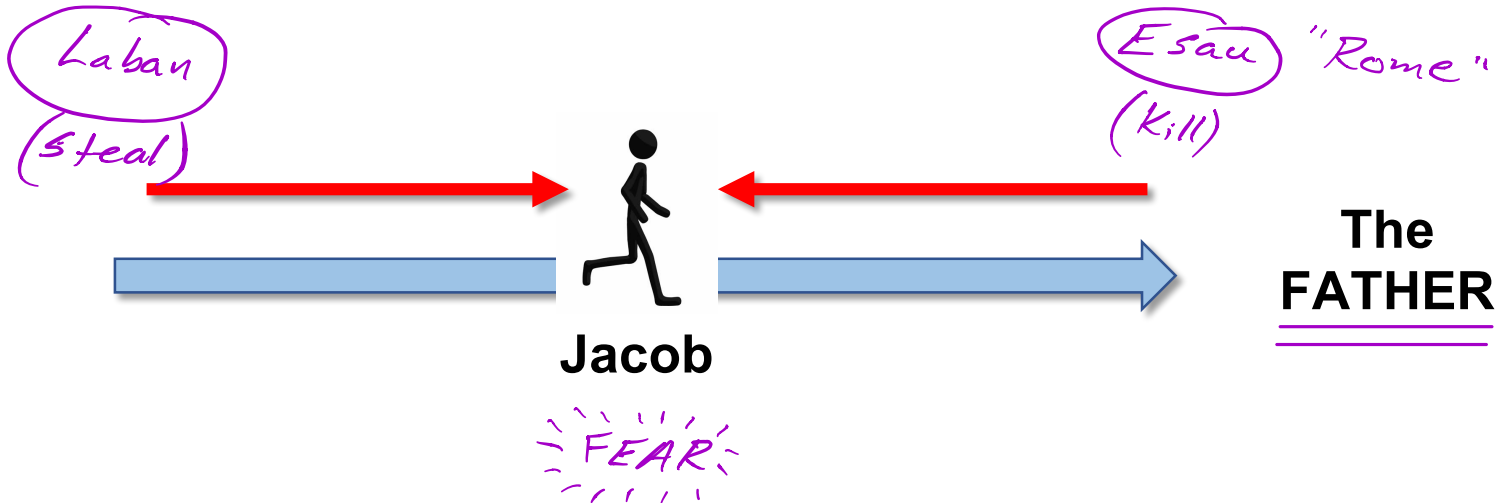
“**rod of discipline**” or “**scepter of instruction**”

## Why did Rachel steal Laban's *teraphim*?

- She, herself, was wicked and idolatrous
- She wanted to punish Laban
- She wanted to rescue Laban from idolatry
- She thought Laban would use them to “divine” their location

## Two opposing Forces

401 = 1112



### Genesis 31:31

Then Jacob replied to **Laban**, “Because I was afraid, for I thought that you would take your daughters from me by force.”

### Genesis 32:11

“Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of **Esau**; for I fear him, that he will come and attack me *and* the mothers with the children.”