



RABBINICAL COUNCIL OF AMERICA

הסתדרות הרבניים אמריקה

28:4 – GIVE YOU AVRAHAM'S BLESSING. Here Ya'akov is formally invested with carrying on the mission of Avraham and, because of this very fact, becomes the heir to the divine blessings granted to the ancestor: "I shall make you into a great nation" (12:2), "and all the nations of the world will be blessed through your descendants" (22:18), and "I shall give you ... the land of your sojourning — the entire land of Canaan" (17:8).

R. Yosi said, "Come and see how many blessings were bestowed upon Ya'akov! The first he obtained from his father through guile; the second, God gave him on his return from Lavan (35:9); the third he received from Esav's guardian angel (32:30); and again he was blessed by his father before he set out for Padan Aram. Seeing himself surrounded with so many blessings, Ya'akov wondered, 'Which one should I first make use of?' He decided to retain the least rich of all, namely, the one which his father had given him before he went to Aram. Certainly it too was important, but it comprised fewer blessings concerning earthly riches than did the others. Ya'akov said to himself, 'I want to derive benefit right now from this blessing; the others I will leave for the future, for the needs of my children. Someday they will have to fight for their lives against powerful and imposing armies and then the blessings kept in store for them will come to their rescue from all directions. But for me, one blessing is all I need to deal with Esav.'

This is like a king who sends his guards after the common thieves and pirates, but keeps his armies, cannons, and generals for battle against his enemies. The prophet Michah is alluding to these arrangements made by the patriarch when he proclaims: **וְהִיא שָׁאָרִית יַעֲקֹב** — "the remnant (of the blessings) of Ya'akov — shall be in the midst of many peoples (enemies) as dew from God, as showers upon the grass, that hopes not for man and waits not for the sons of man" (5:6) (Zohar).

*The Call of the Torah*, Rabbi Elie Munk z"l, p. 374.