

"And Amalek came and (he) battled with Yisrael in Refidim." (17:5)

The *Ramban* writes that when *Bnei Yisrael* went forth to wage war with Amalek, Moshe feared the worst. He prayed intensely to Hashem on their behalf. The *Ramban* questions Moshe's concern. Had not Hashem performed miracles for them? Was there any reason for Him to neglect them at this stage of their redemption?

The *Ramban* explains that Moshe feared Amalek particularly because he was Eisav's grandson. Eisav had been assured of the blessing of "*by your sword you shall live.*" This blessing accorded him great physical might, which assured him of success in his battles. This blessing was the source of Yaakov's fear. His response was based upon his own blessing from his father "*The voice is the voice of Yaakov (and the hands are the hands of Eisav).*" Yaakov was blessed with the power of *tefillah*, prayer. Yaakov had the ability to conquer Eisav's "hands" by using his "voice".

Horav Yechezkel Levenstein, z.l., points out that keeping this concept in mind, we should reflect upon the power of prayer. Each prayer intrinsically contains the blessing of Yaakov. Every time we stand before Hashem and entreat Him through prayer, we are able to use "*Birkas Yaakov*" as a vehicle to ascend the loftiest spiritual heights in order to attain our request. How often do we neglect this blessing and pray without feeling and concentration? How many of life's trials and tribulations could be mitigated through this unique blessing? We should bear in mind that prayer is more than good advice; it is a unique gift bequeathed to the descendants of Yaakov.