

And let them take for Me a portion. (25:2)

For some, giving *tzedakah*, commonly translated as charity, is one of the most difficult tasks to perform. Parting with their hard earned (or otherwise) money is a formidable task. The *yetzer hora*, evil inclination, works overtime to “protect” the “haves” from the “have nots.” On the other hand, the one who has overcome the challenge and gives freely is one of the happiest people. He does not hide or make excuses; he gives with an open hand and feels good about it.

In his *Sefer, Peh Eliyahu, Horav Eliyahu Hamuvi, zl*, offers an innovative explanation for the *pasuk*, delineating the contrasting demeanors and goals of Yaakov *Avinu* versus his brother Eisav *Ha'rasha*. *Hakol kol Yaakov v'ha'yadain yidei Eisav*, “The voice is the voice of Yaakov and the hands are the hands of Eisav” (*Bereishis* 27:22). We derive from this *pasuk* that Yaakov's vocation is spiritual, devoted to Torah and *Tefillah* – expressing the voice of Yaakov. Eisav is committed to thievery, plunder and murder – exemplifying the hands of Eisav. *Rav Hamuvi* brings to our attention the severe contrast between these two sons of *Yitzchak Avinu*. They are so far apart in thought and action that the Torah is clearly speaking about two very different people. Why then do *Chazal* teach the well-known message: “When the voice is the voice of Yaakov, the hands of Eisav are powerless.” These are two different people: one serves with his voice; the other kills with his hands. Clearly, when the voice is the voice of Yaakov, it is not the hands of Eisav that prevail, because Yaakov is not Eisav.

Rav Hamuvi explains that the Torah is imparting a powerful message vis-à-vis a Jew's attitude toward *tzedakah*. *Hakol kol Yaakov v'ha'yadayim*; “The voice (should be) is the voice of Yaakov – *v'ha'yadayim* (likewise, his hands should also be those of Yaakov). In other words, an observant Jew does not complete his mission by *davening* and learning (voice); he must also apply his hands to the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah* by contributing his time, effort and money to help others.