

He similarly instructed the second, also the third, as well as all who followed the droves saying, “In this manner shall you speak to Eisav when you find him.” (32:20)

The text seems to imply that Yaakov *Avinu* instructed each group separately. Why did he go to all of this trouble, reiterating the same thing to each of the groups? He could easily have called them all together and given one speech. **Horav Eliezer Sorotzkin, zl**, offers a practical insight. The whole idea of sending gifts, which clearly smacks of *chanufah*, sychophanting, is something that Yaakov was compelled to do under duress. Otherwise, such behavior is certainly below the dignity of such an eminent person. While it may be common fare in today’s society, it is something that one does only when pushed up against the wall in his dealings with the likes of an Eisav. Otherwise, *chanufah* is shameful, false, and inappropriate. Thus, to act publicly in such a manner is to be considered a *chillul Hashem*, a desecration of Hashem’s Name. If one “must,” he must, but do not call attention to it.

While this may appear to the reader as a sort of double standard, it is not. We live in a world in which the often-used standard for negotiations is the medium of “gifting.” If we seek a favor from a person (other than one who is Torah-oriented), we often have to do something in return. This “something in return” might be labeled a bribe or flattery, but it is, sadly, the way the secular world functions. At times, we, as Jews, must resort to the same form of negotiation, but we do not have to call attention to it or be proud of it.