

## **“You shall not desecrate My holy Name, rather I should be sanctified among Bnei Yisrael.” (22:32)**

The entire chapter preceding the commandment regarding sanctifying Hashem's Name deals completely with the Festivals – the sacrifices that are offered during the Festivals and the *halachos* that pertain to the sacrifices as a result of the Festivals. It is, therefore, puzzling that the chapter closes with the Torah's enjoinder not to desecrate Hashem's Name and to be sure to sanctify His Name. Is there a connection between *chillul Hashem* and the Festivals?

The *Netziv, z.l.*, gives a response that is both compelling and timely. For the most part, the *mitzvos* of the Torah are not similar to religious practice and observance of other religions. One who dons *Tzitzis* will not be mistaken for an individual who is observing another religion's commandment. *Tzitzis* is inherently a Jewish symbol. The Festivals are different. There are non-Jewish festivals. Consequently, the fear prevails that those whose observance of Judaism is not steeped in tradition, who do not have the “backing” of thousands of years of *Mesorah*, might infuse an “enlightened” non-Jewish perspective into the festival. This is why the *Torah* admonishes us against *chillul Hashem* in regard to the way we celebrate our *Yomim Tovim*. This means that *Chanukah*, the Rabbinic Festival commemorating our victory over the forces of evil and impurity, should not become the “festival of lights.” *Purim*, which we celebrate in remembrance of the foiled attempt by Haman, archenemy of the Jewish People, is not to be transformed into a carnival and a masquerade ball. This constitutes *chillul Hashem* at its nadir.