

## **And they shall not desecrate the Name of their G-d. (21:6)**

The sin of *chillul Hashem*, desecrating Hashem's Name, is of such magnitude that only death serves to atone for it. *Teshuvah*, repentance, must be accompanied by *missah*, death, so profound is the blemish created when one desecrates Hashem's Name. What is the reason for this ultimate punishment which brooks no compromise? **Horav Shimshon Pincus, zl**, explains that whenever Hashem metes out justice against one who sins against Him, His Name is sanctified. This is especially true of death, because it demonstrates Hashem's power over man. The *Navi Yeshayahu* 45 says: *Ki Li tichra kol berech*, "For to Me will bow every knee," which is interpreted by *Chazal* (*Talmud Niddah* 30b) as referring to death. When Hashem takes someone's life, He becomes sanctified, because one sees that ultimately everything and everyone must ultimately answer to Hashem.

*Rav* Pincus notes that this concept is accepted by any intelligent person. A funeral evokes a certain element of respect, because all in attendance, especially those who are directly connected to the deceased, put on a head-covering, dress respectfully, recite *Kaddish* and follow Jewish ritual. When we see a coffin lying before us, it is a compelling sight which elicits our acknowledgment of Hashem's reign over us. What greater *Kiddush Hashem* is there than this?

It is now understandable why *chillul Hashem* is not atoned with *teshuvah* alone. Although the individual's repentance affects forgiveness, the void left in the world by his desecration of Hashem's Name is yet to be repaired. It can only be rectified by *Kiddush Hashem*, sanctifying Hashem's Name, through death. Desecration creates a vacuum which is filled with sanctification. Regrettably, the sanctification required to fill this void must be of such a nature that no one can question its source. This occurs when justice is meted out, and the sinner is called home.