

When a person will sin unintentionally from among all the commandments of Hashem that may not be done, and he commits one of them. (4:2)

The *Torah* arranged the various *korbanos* according to individual transgression, distinguishing also between the offering brought by the rich man and his poor counterpart. The commentators delve into the hidden rationale behind the *korbanos* and their relationship to the various sins for which they atone. In his exposition on *korbanos*, The *Sefer Ha'chinuch* makes a compelling statement. He writes that the concept of *korbanos*, of slaughtering and offering an animal upon the *mizbayach*, should invoke and inspire within us a more profound understanding of the nature of a human being. Essentially, man and animal has much in common - physically. The most significant difference between the two is man's cognitive ability, his capacity to think, his *seichel*, common sense. Man leaves the perimeter of *seichel* once he sins, thus becoming equivalent to an animal. When he takes the body of an animal and offers it up to Hashem, as it is burnt and becomes ash, man should imagine that a body without *seichel*, a human being who sins and loses his "mind," becomes nothing. Nothing distinguishes him from an animal.

This is a compelling statement. The underlying concept behind *korbanos* is to convey the lesson that when man sins, he is no longer distinct from the animal world. Sin indicates one's incapacity to think. It reveals to us whether one has *seichel* or not. Is this true? Are we to accept the idea that one who does not observe the *Torah* is "seichel deficient"? Are all those scholars and seemingly intelligent people, who have heretofore been considered brilliant, actually lacking *seichel*? Are they to be considered fools - animals? Furthermore, a G-d-fearing Jew, who diligently observes *mitzvos*, but unintentionally has erased or written two letters on Shabbos - is he a fool - is he an animal? According to the above, even if the person was a righteous Jew who studied *Torah* all day, but once erred inadvertently - for that moment, the *Torah* considers him equivalent to an animal. He must now offer a *korban* to heighten his awareness of his present circumstance.

Horav Gershon Leibman, zl, infers that, indeed, we see here the difference between *daas ha'adam*, human perspective, and *daas haTorah*, the *Torah* view. Man thinks that performing a *mitzvah* is similar to following the laws of a government. There are secular laws and there are *Torah* laws. In one case, he follows the laws of the government; in the second, he follows Hashem's edict. That is where the difference ends. We see from here that it is not the way the *Torah* looks at it. *Mitzvos* are not like secular laws. They refine a person as they purify his soul. *Mitzvos* save us from falling into depravity. They prevent us from succumbing to immorality. They are our elixir for life. They are our *seichel*. When one sins, he is not merely transgressing a law; he blemishes his soul and distances himself from the Almighty. Adam *Ha'rishon* fasted one hundred and thirty years for a sin because it tainted his soul. We are enjoined by *Chazal*, "*Kadesh atzmencha b'mutar lach*," "sanctify yourself in that which is permissible to you." Do not wait to fall into the clutches of the *yetzer hora*, evil inclination. Set up safeguards to protect yourself. Alas, for that, one needs to

develop *seichel*.