

This is the law of the sin-offering. (6:18)

Sin is relative in the attitude of the sinner with regard to the sin; and in the status of the sinner which, commensurate with his position, demands a higher standard in his demeanor and attitude. The *Korban Chatas*, sin-offering, was brought as penance following the commission of an *aveirah b'shogeg*, inadvertent sin. One wonders altogether why penance is required. It is not as if the person had acted maliciously. Everybody errs. Nobody is perfect. *Horav Moshe Soloveitchik, zl*, (Zurich) likened this to a person carrying a package of inexpensive glasses. If, once in a while, a glass slips out of his hand, falls to the ground, and breaks – it is not the end of the world. The replacement value is minimal. When he carries lead crystal, however, such that each glass is highly expensive, he takes utmost care in seeing that the package is delivered safely, with ultimate precision. This is the disparity between mundane activity and spiritual endeavor. Upon executing spiritual endeavor, one cannot afford a lapse; he might shatter the crystal. He has no room for error.

Furthermore, as noted by *Horav Mordechai Zuckerman, zl*, in the previous *parsha* (4:2), the Torah sequences the laws of *chatas* in a descending order: beginning with the sin of the *Kohen Gadol*; followed by the *Sanhedrin*, members of the High Court; then the *Melech*, king, with the individual Jew bringing up the rear. Each one in accordance with his spiritual station in life goes to the head of the line, because the greater one is, that much more is demanded and expected of him. What to the simple man might be viewed as a lapse is to the *Kohen Gadol* a manifestation of moral/ethical turpitude. With the position comes responsibility.