

"You should not see the ox of your brother or his lamb lost, and hide from them; surely you shall return them to your brother." (22:1)

The *Torah* commands us to return a lost ox or lamb to its rightful owner, warning us not to avoid performing this deed. The *Ibn Ezra* notes that this imperative applies under all circumstances, including a contingency in which the finder is preoccupied with another endeavor. Indeed, he states, that even if one is overwhelmed by the tumult of war, the confusion of hastily bidding farewell to family members, or the fear of personal injury or death, he is still expected to notice a stray lamb and return it to its owner. Should not the *Torah* have excused someone experiencing such extreme situations?

We derive from this *pasuk* that we are capable of exhibiting sensitivity to our friends' reality, even during our own crises. Although our minds may be preoccupied with our own survival, we nonetheless must be conscious of our peers' needs at all times.