

They shall be holy to their G-d and they shall not desecrate the Name of their G-d. (21:6)

It seems strange to present two extremes, holiness and desecration, in such close proximity. After all, is holiness not diametrically in opposition to desecration? It is like saying, "Be honest, do good, so not to be a bank robber! Is there not some compromise between *kedushah* and *chillul*? In addressing this question, **Horav Shlomo Breuer, zl**, claims that Hashem is very exact with His close/pious ones. He judges those closest to Him in a very strict manner, because a *tzaddik's* "insignificant" error can have a strong effect upon the average Jew., The good performed by the righteous rarely causes a ripple. His "crime," however, raises a storm of peer indignation which is difficult to quell. That is human nature; we tend to concentrate on the *tzaddik's* weakness and mistake. Thus, the chasm between holiness and desecration is minimized. Every injustice at the hands of a righteous Jew immediately becomes a *chillul* Hashem.

That which is true for the *Kohanim* is equally true for every Jew who represents a religion founded upon and governed by the *Torah*. In the *Talmud Yoma 86a Chazal* comment that when a person speaks and acts as a *ben Torah* should, people say about him, "Praised is the father who taught him *Torah*." Conversely, one whose demeanor does not reflect a *Torah* orientation causes a grave *chillul* Hashem. The *Rambam* supplements *Chazal* when he maintains, "Any act, even though not a sin, committed by a *Torah* scholar; such as, words of anger, or simply 'losing it', becomes a *chillul* Hashem when people talk about it". **Horav Yisrael Salanter, zl**, adds, that in such a case it is unimportant if the scholar is humble and does not view himself as great in stature. Everything is measured in the eyes of the people. If they consider him a scholar, then they respond to him as a scholar.

After all is said and done, the responsibility of one who studies *Torah* is awesome. Indeed his error is not measured realistically, but rather from the perspective of others. One must realize that this responsibility accompanies the role. One who is insensitive to this fact simply does not respect the reality of *Torah* life.