

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

The Torah goes on to say that one who sins *b'shogeg*, unintentionally, must bring a *korban*, offering, to atone his sin. We wonder why one brings a *korban* for an action which he committed unintentionally, with no malice aforethought? *Horav Moshe Soloveitchik, zl (V'Ha'Ish Moshe)*, compares this with one who is transporting inexpensive glassware. Since their value is negligible, he moves the glasses quickly without giving much thought to his endeavor. What is the worst thing that could happen? Some would break – *nu* – it is not the end of the world. If one were transporting expensive crystal or other equally fragile pieces of expensive glassware, however, there is no doubt that he would exhibit great caution and extreme care to move the glassware slowly. One is unusually circumspect with items of great value. A similar idea applies with *shemiras ha'mitzvos*. The attentiveness and care that we show to our *mitzvah* observance is a tell-tale sign of the esteem we have for *mitzvos*. The value we place on *mitzvos* – and concomitantly on our relationship with Hashem – is evident in the manner in which we guard against infraction in our observance. *B'shogeg* means unintentional, but when one is very careful, the chances of an inadvertent act occurring greatly diminish.

Horav Yechezkel Abramsky, zl, cites *Chazal (Kiddushin 81b)*, who state that, when reading the laws concerning unintentional sin, Rabbi Akiva would break down in bitter weeping. He would say, "If in regard to one who intended to eat pork and kosher lamb came up in his hand... the Torah nevertheless says that atonement and forgiveness are required, all the more so does one who intended to eat pork and pork came up in his hand, that he must atone and seek forgiveness." We have an enormous responsibility, because we are not dealing with inexpensive pottery. The repercussion of our failures are enormous.

Imagine, one sits down to eat lunch, thinking that the sandwich he is eating is strictly kosher. Later on, he discovers that the sandwich he ate might have had questionable additives in it. He must bring an *asham talui*, questionable guilt-offering. Thus, prior to partaking of food, one must check the validity of its *kashrus*. We take nothing for granted. Imagine, if someone said that there is a slight, almost minuscule, chance that there could be poison in one of the sandwiches – would anyone touch it?

A Jew who heard the voice of Hashem speaking to him from *Har Sinai*, a Jew who has a G-dly component embedded deep within his psyche, will not/should not act haphazardly. Every step, every activity, everything that he does, will be deliberate and meticulously planned out. This does not just happen. We make them happen by our actions. How they conclude depends largely on how much attention we give to every detail. We are dealing with the most precious commodity: Hashem's *mitzvos*. We have absolutely no room for error.