

## And it shall be for him and his offspring after him a covenant of eternal Priesthood. (25:13)

In the *Talmud Zevachim 101a*, *Chazal* tell us that Pinchas did not become a *Kohen*, member of the Priesthood, until he killed Zimri. Hashem gave the *Kehunah* only to Aharon and his sons, who were anointed at the same time. The offspring to be born to these sons after the anointing would be *Kohanim*. Pinchas, who was neither anointed nor born afterwards, was therefore not included in the *Kehunah*. This *Chazal* raises a number of questions. First, why was Pinchas not anointed? Second, when Pinchas became a *Kohen*, his *kedushah* - sanctity - was unique. It was not *kedushas* Aharon; it was *kedushas* Pinchas. How could Pinchas' descendants make the blessing, "*Who sanctified us in the sanctity of Aharon*" when they performed priestly functions if, in fact, they were not included within the framework of *kedushas* Aharon?

Aharon intrinsically possessed a unique attribute: "*He loved peace and pursued peace, loved people and sought to bring them closer to Torah.*" This enviable attribute, claims **Horav Shimon Schwab, zl**, may have been the reason that Aharon did not act zealously and aggressively to stand up to the rebels that created the Golden Calf. His nephew, Chur, challenged them and died sanctifying Hashem's Name. Aharon attempted to find a conciliatory solution to the rebels' demand for a new leader. He did not take the easy way out; he was simply concerned for the people's welfare.

This overriding concern was the precursor of the Golden Calf. Consequently, when Aharon was inducted into the Priesthood, a cloud was hanging over the family. The *Kehunah* was blemished; only Aharon and his immediate family would be anointed. Although Aharon and his sons had been anointed, *kedushas haKehunah* did not expand outward to his grandsons who had not been anointed. Pinchas was, therefore, not a *Kohen* until he committed his selfless act of zealotry. He took it upon himself to move against Zimri, displaying unprecedented strength and courage. Thus, he eliminated the existing taint on *kedushas* Aharon. Only now would the *kedushah* that was originally Aharon's extend to all *Kohanim*.