

## **Pinchas ben Elazar ben Aharon HaKohen. (25:11)**

When the Torah details Pinchas' lineage, it does so only up until Aharon. In other instances, while the Torah does not list ancestors all the way to the Patriarchs, it does extend to the *rosh ha'mishpachah*, head of the family. For example, Betzalel's lineage is recorded up to Yehudah, and Ohaliav's is listed up to Dan. The Torah stops short of Yaakov *Avinu*. Concerning Pinchas, the Torah stops with Aharon. Why not mention Amram and Levi? [Simply, we could say that the Torah is addressing the *Kehunah* and Pinchas' relationship to it. Amram and Levi were not *Kohanim*, since *Kehunah*, the Priesthood, commenced with Aharon.] *Horav Aryeh Leib Heyman, zl*, suggests that the Torah underscores Aharon's name for an important reason. It imparts a vital message concerning the spiritual/ethical character of both Aharon and his grandson, Pinchas.

We are well-aware that a sudden, unusual, irregular act can indicate the pathology that lurks beneath the veil of the routine. In other words, one can routinely act modestly, with utmost humility, until he is offended, at which time he lets loose with various maledictions, because he has been insulted. People act in a certain manner only because, at the time, it serves them well. When someone or something provokes them, however, they might act differently –atypical of their nature. For example, Avraham *Avinu* subdued his fatherly love and compassion for Yitzchak *Avinu* and listened to Hashem when He commanded him to slaughter his and Sarah *Imeinu's* son. How do we know that this was actually not indicative of Avraham's real nature? We see this from the manner in which he carried out all of his "routine" acts of *chesed*. They were all executed under the rubric of his *yiraas Shomayim*. Avraham's acts of *chesed* were not happenstance, carried out when it was convenient and popular. He did not act kindly to assuage his ego. He was real, carrying out Hashem's command to act kindly to people. The *Akeidah*, Binding of Yitzchak, demanded of him that he go against his inherent nature by subduing his fatherly love.

Likewise, Aharon *HaKohen's* reputation was based on love for his fellowman, pursuing and promoting peace between men and between husband and wife. Suddenly, his grandson commits an act of zealotry, which the people viewed as wanton murder. As Aharon's grandson, it might indicate that Aharon is not as "perfect" as he is portrayed. Was Aharon really like Pinchas, or, on the contrary, was Pinchas' act of zealotry rooted in his love for *Klal Yisrael* and Hashem? The answer lies in heralding Pinchas' act of zealotry to his grandfather, Aharon, and, concomitantly, Aharon's pursuit of peace, his abiding love of Hashem. His total abdication to carrying out His will was no different than Pinchas' act of slaying the perpetrator who had profaned Hashem's Name. They were all connected.

Conversely, Pinchas' act of zealotry was not unlike Aharon's pursuit of peace. He knew that peace could only reign if the entire nation were to glorify Hashem's Name. Zimri was a perpetrator whose incursion defamed Hashem, undermined Moshe *Rabbeinu*, and impugned the integrity of *Klal Yisrael*. For the sake of peace, he had to be stopped. Aharon *HaKohen's* grandson took it upon himself to be the zealot in order to preserve peace.