

“And it shall be for him and his offspring after him a covenant of eternal priesthood, because he took vengeance for his G-d, and he atoned for the Bnei Yisrael.” (25:13)

It is a well-known maxim that Hashem remunerates *middah k'neged middah*, measure for measure. This *pasuk* raises many questions. First, what is the relationship between Pinchas' act of zealotry and the blessing of eternal priesthood for his descendants? Second, when the *Torah* says “Pinchas saw,” it seems to imply that Pinchas saw what no one else saw. Were they not all there to witness the dastardly act committed by Zimri? The previous *Gerrer Rebbe*, *Horav Pinchas Menachem Alter, z.l.*, cites the *Baal Shem Tov*, who relates in the name of the *Arizal*, that Hashem shows a person only that which relates to him – either positively or negatively. Indeed, when the famous *tzaddik Horav Zushe, z.l., m'Annipole*, observed someone acting in a sinful manner, he would exclaim, “Oy Zushe, the sinner, oy Zushe, the sinner.” In other words, he felt that Hashem was conveying a message to him: if he saw a sin, then he himself was somehow tainted in that area. When the sinner heard *Rav Zushe* make such a startling statement, he realized that he should repent.

When Pinchas saw Zimri's immoral act, he wondered why he was witnessing it. He introspected his own behavior and concluded that Hashem was not talking to him. He surmised that Hashem wanted him to see this act, so that he would react zealously and avenge the honor of Hashem and *Klal Yisrael*. Pinchas saw the *Shechinah* distancing itself from *Klal Yisrael*. He acted immediately. Pinchas added *kedushah*, holiness, to the Jewish People.

He was not a *Kohen*, by design, so that he could receive his due. For contributing to the Jewish People's spiritual ascendancy, for adding *kedushah*, he was rewarded with additional *kedushah* for his descendants. Pinchas noticed a void, and he immediately filled it. This occurs in numerous instances in our lives, but as the old adage goes, “Some people make things happen, while others just stand there wondering what happened.”