

Pinchas son of Elazar son of Aharon Hakohen, turned back My wrath from you Bnei Yisrael. When he zealously avenged Me among them. (25:11)

Pinchas acted on behalf of the Almighty. He reacted with jealousy and with vengeance, as he witnessed Zimri publicly desecrating Hashem's Name. *Rashi* emphasizes the word, "*kinaasi*," "My jealousy/wrath". Pinchas reacted in the same manner that Hashem would have. He became angry as Hashem would. Hashem's anger was his anger; he accepted Hashem's "hurt" as his own hurt. *Horav Baruch Mordechai Ezrachi, Shlita*, delves into the concept of "*kinaasi*" in an attempt to explain its significance. We find that *Rashi* previously had mentioned that the tribes, especially *Shevet Shimon*, were criticizing and demeaning Pinchas for his descent from a Midyanite priest, namely Yisro. They would say, "Look how this one, whose grandfather fattened calves for idolworship, has had the audacity to slay a *Nasi*." For this reason, the *Torah* traces Pinchas' lineage back to Aharon, underlining his holy pedigree. We may wonder why they focused on the "*pitum*," fattening of the calves? What about the other aspects of *avodah zarah*, idol worship, areas that are more involved with the actual worship? Why did they pick on an area of worship that for the most part is only a *hachanah*, preparation, for the real thing?

Horav Ezrachi explains that they sought to demean Pinchas even more. Not only did his grandfather worship idols, his devotion and love for them was overwhelming. He even fattened calves, so that they would be a better sacrifice. His commitment to idolworship was to the point of zealousness. Those who denigrated Pinchas were emphasizing a point. Pinchas' zealousness was an inherited trait. This was a family characteristic. His maternal grandfather possessed a similar sort of zealousness - for idols.

Hashem writes in His *Torah* that, while Pinchas did inherit an overwhelming sense of commitment to a goal, his objective was different from his grandfather's: his zealousness was for "*kinaasi*", "My jealousy". Pinchas was totally committed; he was zealously devoted - to Hashem. The zealousness itself is not significant. Rather, the importance lies in the ideological posture behind it. There are all types of zealots; their goal determines the holiness of their mission. Hashem attested to the integrity of Pinchas' objective.