

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

The text of the *pasuk* seems inconsistent. Did Pinchas achieve vengeance only for "his G-d"? Should the *Torah* not have said that he took vengeance for the G-d of all of *Yisrael*, in the plural? Was Pinchas acting as a member of *Klal Yisrael* or not? The **Ozrover Rebbe, zl**, infers from here that one must serve Hashem as if he were the only person in the world and that his *mitzvah* is the only *mitzvah* that will be performed! This is in keeping with the dictum of *Chazal* in the *Talmud Sanhedrin 37a* who say that everyone should feel that "*bishvili nivrah ha'olam*," "because of me the world was created."

Imagine the enormous responsibility of the individual who has a "global" view of his relationship with Hashem. His *mitzvah* observance takes the form of a new profile. He adopts a new image. He has an overwhelming responsibility to correct and observe, to rectify wrongs and strengthen *mitzvah* performance.

Pinchas saw a public travesty, an open degradation of Jewish morals, a humiliation of *Torah* leadership. Surely someone had the responsibility to do something! When he saw that no one was responding, he grabbed the spear and took appropriate action. He did not say, "Since the great leaders are not taking action, why should I?" Pinchas rose to the occasion and took vengeance for his G-d.

Every Jew is a member of the community of "*Klal*" *Yisrael*, but this status should not overshadow one's individuality. One must view himself as the only one in the world who can do what he is about to do. He is not to wait and rely upon others. True, there is strength in numbers. When a group is working together for the sake of Heaven, then by all means, he should participate. When he perceives no public response, be it due to apathy or indifference, he must not permit this collective inaction to influence his own response. After all, he is the only one - and if he does not act, who will?