

"Let Hashem set.. a man over the congregation... and Hashem said to Moshe. Take to yourself Yehoshua ben Nun, a man in whom there is spirit." (27:16,18)

The *Kotzker Rebbe z.l.* questions the selection of Yehoshua as successor to Moshe *Rabbeinu*. Pinchas, the zealot who endangered his life in order to uphold the sanctity of *Klal Yisrael*, seems to have been overlooked. The position of *Kehunah Gedolah* is conferred upon Pinchas, but not the role of *Klal Yisrael's* leader. Why? The *Kotzker Rebbe* responds that a *kanai*, zealot, is not an appropriate choice for leader, since he can not relate equitably to all people. Indeed, the *kanai* distinguishes himself in his unique temperament. He endangers himself on behalf of Hashem, risking his life to uphold the sanctity of *Klal Yisrael*. His indomitable devotion to Hashem manifests itself in his aggressive actions to purge any alien tinge of evil which would denigrate *kedushas Am Yisrael*, the sanctity of our people. A leader must relate to and empathize with his community. A *kanai*, however, is set apart from his community.

We may advance this idea. The *kanai* acts alone or, at the most, as a member of a select group of dedicated individuals. The *kanai* takes notes of a travesty, and he boldly responds spontaneously. He can not tolerate any act of aggression against Hashem, His *Torah*, or its disseminators. He does not deliberate vacuously while the *Torah* is being denigrated. One who acts in such a singular individualistic manner will not serve well as a leader whose focus should be on unifying his entire community into one harmonious group. The leadership must work in concert with the community.