**Class # 37 - Parshat Pinchas - Man of War and Man of Peace, Pinchas and Menachem Begin**

Advanced Fellowship Parsha Class - Sponsored in memory of Alice Toby Barbanel Z”l

Rabbi Pinny Rosenthal - prepared collaboratively with Rabbi Yoni Sacks

Menachem Begin (16 August 1913 – 9 March 1992) was an Israeli politician, founder of [Likud](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Likud) and the [sixth Prime Minister of Israel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Prime_Ministers_of_Israel). Before the creation of the state of Israel, he was the leader of the Zionist militant group [Irgun](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irgun), the [Revisionist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revisionist_Zionism) breakaway from the larger Jewish paramilitary organization [Haganah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haganah). He proclaimed a [revolt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irgun#The_%22Revolt%22), on 1 February 1944, against the [British mandatory government](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mandatory_Palestine), which was opposed by the [Jewish Agency](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish_Agency_for_Palestine#Jewish_Agency_for_Palestine). As head of the Irgun, he targeted the British in Palestine.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menachem_Begin#cite_note-1) Later, the Irgun fought the Arabs during the [1947–48 Civil War in Mandatory Palestine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1947%E2%80%9348_Civil_War_in_Mandatory_Palestine).

Begin was elected to the first Knesset, as head of [Herut](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herut), the party he founded, and was at first on the political fringe, embodying the opposition to the [Mapai](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mapai)-led government and Israeli establishment. He remained in opposition in the eight consecutive elections (except for a national unity government around the [Six-Day War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Six-Day_War)), but became more acceptable to the political center. His 1977 [electoral victory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli_legislative_election,_1977) and premiership ended three decades of [Labor Party](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli_Labor_Party) political dominance.

Begin’s most significant achievement as Prime Minister was the signing of a [peace treaty with Egypt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egypt%E2%80%93Israel_Peace_Treaty) in 1979, for which he and [Anwar Sadat](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anwar_Sadat) shared the [Nobel Prize for Peace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nobel_Prize_for_Peace). In the wake of the [Camp David Accords](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camp_David_Accords), the [Israel Defense Forces](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israel_Defense_Forces) (IDF) withdrew from the [Sinai Peninsula](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sinai_Peninsula), which was captured from Egypt in the [Six-Day War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Six-Day_War).

Former Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin sharp response to the German consul's request for a Palestinian state. In clip, legendary Prime Minister Menachem Begin reacts to criticism over his opposition to the creation of a Palestinian state.

[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LpEb6TDACRE**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LpEb6TDACRE)

Menachem Begin remarks on the Camp David agreement cementing the Peace agreement between Egypt and Israel. [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVuKhfSHg4g**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVuKhfSHg4g)

1. **What are the challenges in one and the same person being both a militant and peace maker? Was Menachem Begin a militant when he was young and a peace-maker when he grew old?**
2. **Why is this quality so rare?**

**Ecclesiastes - Koheles Perek 3**

1. A season is set for everything, a time for every experience under heaven:
2. A time for being born and a time for dying, A time for planting and a time for uprooting the planted;
3. A time for slaying and a time for healing, A time for tearing down and a time for building up;
4. A time for weeping and a time for laughing, A time for wailing and a time for dancing;
5. A time for throwing stones and a time for gathering stones, A time for embracing and a time for shunning embraces;
6. A time for seeking and a time for losing, A time for keeping and a time for discarding;
7. A time for ripping and a time for sewing, A time for silence and a time for speaking;
8. A time for loving and a time for hating; A time for war and a time for peace.

**3) What challenge of temperament does Koheles guide us to cultivate in ourselves?**

**4) Which verse deals with balancing militancy and peacemaking?**

**End of Parshat Balak**

*Israel Sins with Moab*

25:1 Israel was staying in [Shittim](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3348) when the people [began to](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3349) behave immorally with the [Moabite girls](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3350). 25:2 [The girls] invited the people to their religious sacrifices, and the people ate and worshipped the [Moabite] gods. 25:3 Israel thus [became involved](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3351) with [Baal Peor](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3352), and [God displayed anger against Israel](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3353). 25:4 God said to Moses, 'Take the people's leaders, and [have them] [impale](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3354) [[the idolators](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3355)] [publicly](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3356) before God. This will reverse God's display of anger against Israel.' 25:5 Moses said to Israel's judges, 'Each of you must kill your [constituents](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3357) who were involved with Baal Peor.' 25:6 [The judges] were still weeping [[in indecision](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3358)] at the Communion Tent entrance, when [an Israelite](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3359) brought forth a [Midianite](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3360) woman to his brethren before the eyes of Moses and the Israelite community. 25:7 When [Pinchas](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3361), a son of Eleazar and a grandson of Aaron the priest, saw this, he rose up from the midst of the assemblage and took a spear in his hand. 25:8 He followed the Israelite man into the tent's [inner chamber](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3362), and ran them through, [driving the spear] through the Israelite man and woman's [groin](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3363).

With that, the plague that had struck the Israelites was arrested.

25:9 In that plague, 24,000 people had died.

**RASHI - AND PHINEAS SAW** – He saw what was being done and he was thereby reminded of the law on this subject ([Sanhedrin 82a](http://shas.alhatorah.org/Sanhedrin/82a)). He said to Moses, "I have received a tradition from you: he who has intercourse with an Aramean (heathen) woman, zealous people may attack him". He replied to him: "Let him who reads the letter be the agent for executing it"; — straightway, ויקח רמח בידו HE TOOK A JAVELIN IN HIS HAND, etc

**4) Why was the plague stopped?**

**Beginning of Parshat Pinchas**

*Pinchas' Reward*

25:10 God spoke to Moses, saying, 25:11 'Pinchas (a son of Eleazar and grandson of Aaron the priest) was the one who zealously took up My cause among the Israelites and turned My anger away from them, so that I did not destroy them in My demand for [exclusive worship](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3364). 25:12 Therefore, tell him that I have given him My covenant of peace. 25:13 This shall imply a covenant of [eternal priesthood](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3365) to him and his descendants after him. It is [given to him] because he zealously took up God's cause and made atonement for the Israelites.' 25:14 The name of the man who was killed along with the Midianite woman was [Zimri son of Salu](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3366), a prince of the [Simeonite](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3367) paternal line. 25:15 The name of the Midianite woman who was killed was [Kazbi](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3368), the daughter of [Tzur](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3369), [governor](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=4&CHAPTER=25#C3370) of a paternal line in Midian.

**5) The Al-HaTorah website formulated the questions very precisely:**

**What was so uniquely praiseworthy about Pinechas's violent act [zealous act] that it merited eternal covenants of peace and priesthood?**

**If Pinechas was simply following the laws of the Torah, why did he deserve such an exceptional reward? And if not, what gave him the right to take the law into his own hands, let alone be eternally recompensed for his bloodshed?**

**Rambam, The Laws of Prohibited Sexual relations 12:4-6**

4] Whenever a man has relations with a gentile woman in public, i.e., the relations are carried out in the presence of ten or more Jews, if a zealous person strikes him and kills him, he is considered praiseworthy and ardent [This applies whether the relations were] in the context of marriage or licentious in nature. This matter is a halachah conveyed to Moshe at Sinai. Support for this can be derived from Pinchas' slaying of Zimri.

5] The zealous person can strike [the fornicators] only at the time of relations, as was the case with regard to Zimri, as [[Numbers 25:8](http://www.chabad.org/9953#v8)] states: "[He pierced]ו the woman into her stomach." If, however, [the transgressor] withdraws, he should not be slain. Indeed, if [the zealous person] slays him, he may be executed [as a murderer].

If the zealous person comes to ask permission from the court to slay him, they do not instruct him [to], even if this takes place at the time [of relations]. Not only that, if the zealous person comes to kill the transgressor and he withdraws and kills the zealous person in order to save himself, the transgressor is not executed for killing him.

When a Jew has relations with the daughter of a resident alien, the zealous may not strike him. [The transgressor] should, however, be given stripes for rebellious conduct.

**RASHI - [I GIVE TO HIM] MY COVENANT – PEACE** — This means: I give him my covenant that it should be to him as a covenant of peace; just like a man who shows gratitude and friendliness to one who has done him a kindness. So here, too, the Holy One, blessed be He, expressed to him His peaceful feelings towards him.

**AND IT SHALL BE UNTO HIM** – this covenant of Mine shall be unto him —

‎ברית כהנת עולם A COVENANT OF AN EVERLASTING PRIESTHOOD — for although the priesthood had already been given to Aaron's descendants (cf. Exodus 28:40-41), it was given only to Aaron and his sons who had been anointed together with him and to their offspring whom they might beget after they had been anointed. But Phineas who had been born prior to that and had not been anointed, had not as yet attained the status of priesthood until now. So, too, do we read in Zevachim 101b: Phineas did not become a priest until he had slain Zimri.

As the Talmud states in **Sanhedrin 82b**

Pinchas **came and slammed them** on the ground **before the Omnipresent** and **said before Him: Master of the Universe, will twenty-four thousand** of the children **of Israel fall due to these** sinners? **As it is stated: “And those that died in the plague were twenty-four thousand”** (Numbers 25:9). **And that is** the meaning of that **which is written: “And Pinchas stood and wrought judgment** and the plague was stayed” (Psalms 106:30).

**Sanhedrin 82b - The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Moses: Be the first to** greet Pinchas with a blessing of **peace,** to honor him before the people, **as it is stated: “Therefore say: I hereby give to him My covenant of peace”** (Numbers 25:12), and it is stated: “And it shall be unto him and to his descendants after him a covenant of eternal priesthood, because he was zealous for his God and he atoned for the children of Israel” (Numbers 25:13), **and this atonement** that he facilitated **is worthy of continuing to atone forever.**