**Class # 41– Parshat Pinchas  - Vigilantism - is it ever justified?**

Advanced Fellowship Parsha Class

Rabbi Pinny Rosenthal

Videos

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7NMwohMhP10> **Radical Young Israelis and the Price Tag Attacks**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i7ZvxpwzBHI> **Palestinian toddler burns to death in suspected Jewish ‘price tag’ attack**

# Why is Moriah Goldberg, 20, who just finished a 3-month sentence for throwing stones at Palestinians, proud of her actions?

1. What are her arguments?
2. What are strengths and weaknesses of her arguments?
3. What is the difference between an Ideologue and a critical thinker?

***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.

*Pinchas' Reward - [Parshat Pinchas]*

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.

1. Why did Pinchas kill Zimri and no one else?
2. Why not Moshe?
3. What does Hashem reward of the covenant of peace demonstrate?

**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.