

Reb Pinchas of Koretz

Imrie Pinchas

Parshas Naso

Introduction

This discourse presents a reflection by **Reb Pinchas of Koretz**—a central figure among the early Chassidic masters and a close disciple of the Baal Shem Tov—on the subtle spiritual interplay between prophecy, identity, and the soul's mission. Reb Pinchas (born circa 1726, died 1791) lived in Koretz (in present-day Ukraine) and was known for his fierce commitment to truth, silence, and inner refinement. Unlike other Chassidic leaders who actively attracted followers, Reb Pinchas often emphasized restraint, introspection, and authentic avodah (divine service). He was considered a sharp and mystical thinker, deeply invested in revealing the hidden depth of simple words and actions. This teaching, focusing on a seemingly simple instruction from the haftarah, opens a gateway into the layered reality of soul-rooted communication, especially regarding the mission of Shimshon. We now explore it through a brief summary, practical takeaway, and a true Chassidic story connected to Reb Pinchas' legacy.

In the haftarah: "And do not eat anything impure" (Judges 13:4).	(')בהפטרך ואל תאכלי כל טמא (שופטים י"ג, ד
In the name of the Rav, of blessed memory:	בשם הרב ז"ל
That angel who came to the wife of Manoach	אותו המלאך שבא לאשת מנוח
was the soul of Shimshon,	היה נשמת שמשון
and this is [the meaning of] what he said:	וזהו שאמר
"And do not eat anything impure" —	— ואל תאכלי כל טמא
read it instead as: "Do not feed [him] anything..."	'.קרי ביה: אל תאכלי וגו'

[NOTE Summary:

The verse from the haftarah, “וְאַל תֹּאכְלִי כֹל טָמֵא – Do not eat anything impure,” is reinterpreted by Reb Pinchas of Koretz not merely as a command to Manoach's wife, but as a deeper spiritual instruction flowing from the soul of her yet-unborn son. Reb Pinchas explains that the angel who appeared to her was actually the *neshamah* (soul) of Shimshon himself. Thus, when the angel says, “Do not eat anything impure,” it can be read homiletically: *Al ta'achili*—“Do not feed me anything impure.” The command is now seen as the soul of Shimshon speaking through its own messenger, requesting purity in his gestation and early development. This mystical insight reveals that even before birth, the soul actively seeks holiness and directs its own spiritual conditions. It's not simply a command from Heaven—it's the unborn tzaddik's own plea for purity.

Practical Takeaway:

Spiritual sensitivity begins before conscious awareness. Even in utero, the soul reaches out to shape its environment. This teaches us that the path of holiness is not something imposed from

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the outside, but something that our own deepest self longs for. In our lives, we often think growth must be forced or taught—but this discourse reminds us that inside us is a *Shimshon-like soul* already begging for purity, already aware. When we act with integrity, choose spiritually clean nourishment (physical or emotional), or avoid unworthy influences, we are not just obeying rules—we are listening to our own soul's angelic voice.

True Chassidic Story:

It is told that one Friday night in Koretz, Reb Pinchas was sitting quietly at his Shabbos table with only a few close disciples. A man entered the house in great distress, carrying his young son who was gravely ill. Reb Pinchas rose from his seat and whispered something into the boy's ear. Then he turned to the father and said, "Take him home. Feed him nothing but what your wife cooks with pure intent. The child's soul will recognize the taste." The man, puzzled but desperate, did exactly that. Within three days, the child recovered.

Years later, this boy—now a man—asked Reb Pinchas why he had whispered to him while unconscious. The Rebbe answered simply: "Your soul needed reminding. It had already chosen its path, but illness clouded its clarity. I merely told it what it already knew—that it desires only purity." This mirrors the insight from the haftarah: the soul of the tzaddik cries out for holiness even before it can speak. **END NOTE]**