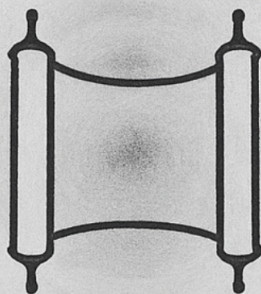


בס"ד

Reb Pinchas of Koretz

Imrie Pinchas

Parshas Vayitzei



Dedicated To:

ר' נחום אהרן & חיה

ליטשיקאווסקי

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Reb Pinchas of Koretz

Imrie Pinchas
Parshas Vayeitzei

Siman #42

“And Yaakov went out from Be’er Sheva and went to Charan” (28:10). He said: when a person leaves the beis midrash, which is Be’er Sheva, a well of living waters, he leaves a place of spiritual life and clarity.

“And he went to Charan,” meaning to the marketplace, a place where people act freely and independently, distant from the protected atmosphere of holiness.

“And he encountered the place” (Book of Genesis 28:11), meaning when he encounters the marketplace; it darkens for him on that road. Lodging there means he leaves his intellect and does not settle himself, for “the sun had set,” meaning the intellect leaves him.

“And he dreamed” (Book of Genesis 28:12), meaning he reminds himself, from a language of “healing” and being healthy, strengthening his soul again. He sees “a ladder set on the earth and its head reaching the heavens,” meaning people view it as small but it is truly great.

For “ladder” equals “money” in gematria, and “angels of God going up and down on it” (Book of Genesis 28:12) means even the righteous ascend and descend because of money. As taught in the Yerushalmi: once a Sage lost in business and could not state a halachah (Jerusalem Talmud, Terumos, end of chapter 8).

And he further said: in this verse “ladder” also equals “voice” in gematria. “Set on the earth” means people benefit from it. “Its head reaches the heavens” because angels recite song through the voice. And “angels ascend and descend on it”: one who does not answer equally with his fellow is cast into the River of Fire.

[NOTE Summary:

R. Pinchas of Koretz teaches that when a person steps outside the sheltered holiness of the beis midrash, symbolized by Yaakov leaving Be’er Sheva, he enters a realm of confusion and spiritual darkness like Charan, a marketplace where one’s inner clarity is easily lost. The pasuk “and he encountered the place” reveals how a person may suddenly find himself in an environment that dims the mind, causing the “sun” of wisdom to set.

וַיֵּצֵא יַעֲקֹב מִבְּעַר שְׁבַע וַיֵּלֶךְ חֲרָנָה וְגו' (ספר בראשית פרק כח:פסוק י'). אָמַר: כְּשֶׁאֶדָם יוֹצֵא מִבֵּית הַמִּדְרָשׁ שֶׁהוּא בְּעַר שְׁבַע בָּאָר מִמֵּי חַיִּים

וַיֵּלֶךְ חֲרָנָה כְּלוּמָר לְשׁוּק, מְקוֹם הַתְּקַשִּׁי וּבֶן חוֹרִין

וַיִּפְגַּע בַּמָּקוֹם (ספר בראשית פרק כח:פסוק יא) כְּלוּמָר כְּשֶׁהוּא פּוֹגֵעַ בְּשׁוּק וְנִתְשָׁד לֹו בַּדֶּרֶךְ הֵהִיא וַיֵּלֶךְ שָׁם דְּהִינּוּ שִׁיבָא מִן הַשָּׁכֵל, וְאִינוּ מִיֵּשֵׁב אֶת עַצְמוֹ כָּלֵל כִּי בָּא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ שֶׁהַשָּׁכֵל הוֹלֵךְ מִמֶּנּוּ

וַיַּחֲלֵם (ספר בראשית פרק כח:פסוק יב) כְּשֶׁמִּזְכִּיר אֶת עַצְמוֹ וְהוּא לְשׁוֹן חָלִים וּבָרִיא, שִׁיבָרִיא וַיִּחַזֵּק שָׁם אֶת הַנִּשְׁמָה. רוּחָהּ וְהִנֵּה סֵלֶם מַצֵּב אַרְצָה וְרֹאשׁוֹ מַגִּיעַ הַשָּׁמַיְמָה כְּלוּמָר שֶׁבְּעֵינֵי בְּנֵי אָדָם נִרְאָה שֶׁהוּא דָּבָר קָטָן אֲבָל בְּאַמֶּת הוּא דָּבָר גָּדוֹל

כִּי סֵלֶם הוּא בְּגִימָטְרִיָּה מְמוּן, וּמִלֵּאכֵי אֱלֹקִים עֲלִים וַיּוֹרְדִים בּוֹ (ספר בראשית פרק כח:פסוק יב) כְּלוּמָר אֲפִילוֹ הַצְדִּיקִים עֲלִים וַיּוֹרְדִים בּוֹ. וְכַדְאִיתָא בְּגִמְטָרָא (ירושלמי תרומות סוף פרק ח') שֶׁפַּעַם אֶחָד הַפְסִיד בְּפָרְקֵמְטָא וְלֹא אָמַר הִלָּכָה, עֵינֵי שָׁם

וְעוֹד אָמַר בְּפִסְיוֹק זֶה סֵלֶם בְּגִימָטְרִיָּה קוֹל. מַצֵּב אַרְצָה כְּלוּמָר בְּנֵי אָדָם נִהְיִים מִמֶּנּוּ כִּי הוּא דָּבָר נָאָה. וְרֹאשׁוֹ מַגִּיעַ הַשָּׁמַיְמָה כִּי הַמִּלָּאכִים אוֹמְרִים שִׁירָה בְּקוֹל. וּמִלֵּאכֵי אֱלֹקִים עֲלִים וַיּוֹרְדִים בּוֹ כִּי זֶה שִׁאִינוּ עוֹנָה בְּשׁוּהָ עִם חֲבִירוֹ זוֹרְקִים אוֹתוֹ לְנֶהֱרַךְ דִּינִיור

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Yet within this descent lies the possibility of awakening, expressed through Yaakov's dream, which R. Pinchas interprets as a moment of self-reminding that begins the healing of the soul.

The ladder represents things that appear small in the eyes of people but are profoundly great in truth. Whether the ladder symbolizes money or the human voice, both are forces that influence a person's spiritual ascent or descent. Even the righteous can be elevated or diminished by their relationship with these forces. The Yerushalmi's teaching that a sage once lost his clarity due to business loss illustrates how mundane entanglements unsettle even great individuals. Likewise, the voice has the power to lift angels in song or push a person into danger when misused, showing that seemingly ordinary human faculties hold cosmic consequence.

Overall, R. Pinchas reveals that every descent into worldly confusion conceals a ladder whose top reaches the heavens. The task is to notice this ladder and use it to strengthen the soul rather than to let worldly forces sway one downward.

Practical Takeaway:

When entering environments that distract or weaken spiritual clarity, pause and "remember yourself." Use this moment like Yaakov's dream to restore inner strength. Recognize that everyday forces—money, speech, ordinary encounters—are ladders reaching to heaven. Treat them with careful awareness so they elevate you rather than pull you downward.

Chassidic Story:

R. Pinchas of Koretz was once traveling through a busy market filled with shouting merchants, clattering wagons, and the overwhelming noise of trade. His students, disturbed by the chaos, asked how one could retain holiness in such a place. R. Pinchas paused and pointed to a simple Jew standing by his stall, eyes closed for a brief moment between customers, whispering a short prayer before returning to his work.

"Do you see?" R. Pinchas said. "That man found a ladder in the middle of the marketplace."

Later he explained that holiness is not reserved for quiet rooms or hidden study halls. Even in the busiest, loudest environments—"Charan," as the Torah calls it—there exists a ladder whose top reaches heaven. A person only needs a moment of remembering, a small inner awakening, to transform confusion into ascent. That simple Jew, with his whispered prayer, had climbed higher than many who never leave their beis midrash.

From that day on, R. Pinchas's students understood that the true work of the soul is not to avoid the marketplace, but to discover the ladder within it.

END NOTE]

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Siman #43

“And he dreamed, and behold a ladder was set on the earth, and behold angels of God, etc.” (28:12). He said that a dream is the waste-product of thought. And the more refined the thought is, the better the dream is.

And the more delicate and subtle the thought is, the better the dream becomes. And in great tzaddikim the dream comes through an angel created from their own thought, as it is taught in the Gemara (Chagigah 14a): “Here through an angel,” etc.

Therefore it is written regarding Yaakov: “And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set on the earth, etc., and behold angels of God ascending and descending on it” (Book of Genesis 28:12). They ascend first because those angels were from his own thought; therefore they ascend first and afterwards descend to him in his dream.

And in very great tzaddikim, whose thought is exceedingly elevated, a full angel is formed and that angel comes to him in the dream, for there are ten levels of angels—Ar’elim, Ishim, etc. (Zohar, Raya Mehemna, Pinchas 257a).

Therefore sleep comes in order to lower the waste-product of thought downward, allowing the refined part of thought to rise upward.

[NOTE Summary:

R. Pinchas of Koretz teaches that a dream is the “waste-product” of thought, the residue left after the mind filters out the unnecessary and retains the refined. The purer and finer a person’s thoughts are, the purer the dreams that emerge from them. For ordinary people, dreams are mixed with confusion, but for great tzaddikim, whose thoughts are elevated and subtle, even the residue forms spiritual beings. Their dreams come through angels actually created from their own thoughts, as the Gemara teaches that some revelations come “through an angel.”

This explains why the Torah describes the angels in Yaakov’s dream as “ascending” before “descending.” According to R. Pinchas, the angels first ascend because they originate from Yaakov’s own elevated thoughts. After ascending, they then descend back to him within the dream, carrying a clarified message shaped by his inner spiritual state.

R. Pinchas further notes that there are ten levels of angels—such as Ar’elim and Ishim—and the level called “Ishim” is so named because such angels are created from human spiritual activity. This reveals a profound

ויחלם והנה סלם מַצֵּב אֶרֶץ וְהָנָה מִלְאָכֵי אֱלֹקִים וְגו' (ספר בראשית פרק כח:פסוק יב). אָמַר, שְׁחֵלֹם הוּא פְסוּלַת הַמַּחְשְׁבָה.

וְכָל מָה שֶׁהַמַּחְשְׁבָה יוֹתֵר דַּקָּה, הַחֵלֶם יוֹתֵר טוֹב. וּבְצַדִּיקִים גְּדוֹלִים הַחֵלֶם הוּא עַל יְדֵי מִלְאָךְ הַנִּבְרָא מִהַמַּחְשְׁבָה שְׁלֹ בְעֶצְמוֹ כִּדְאִיתָא בַּגְמָרָא (חגיגה דף י"ד עמוד א') כָּאֵן עַל יְדֵי מִלְאָךְ דְּכו'.

וְלָכֵן כָּתוּב בִּיְעֻקֵּב: וַיַּחלֶם וְהָנָה סֵלֶם מִצָּב אֶרֶץ וְגו' וְהָנָה מִלְאָכֵי אֱלֹקִים עֲלִים וְיֹרְדִים בּוֹ (ספר בראשית פרק כח:פסוק יב). עוֹלִים תַּחֲלָה, כִּי אוֹתָן מִלְאָכִים הָיוּ מִהַמַּחְשְׁבָה שְׁלֹ בְעֶצְמוֹ, לָכֵן עוֹלִים תַּחֲלָה וְאַחֵר כֵּן יוֹרְדִים אֲצִלּוֹ בְּחֵלֶם שְׁלֹ.

וּבְצַדִּיקִים גְּדוֹלִים שְׁמַחְשְׁבָתָם גְּדוֹלָה כִּיּוֹתֵר נִעְשֶׂה מִלְאָךְ, וְאוֹתוֹ מִלְאָךְ כֵּא אֲצִלּוֹ בְּחֵלֶם, כִּי יֵשׁ עֲשֻׁרָה מַדְרָגוֹת מִלְאָכִים אֲרָאִים, אִישִׁים וְכו' (זוהר, רַעֲיָא מְהִימָנָא, פִּינְחָס דף רנ"ז עמוד א').

וְלָכֵן בָּאָה הַשְׁנָה לְהוֹרִיד הַפְסוּלַת מִהַמַּחְשְׁבָה לְמַטָּה.

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principle: human thoughts have creative power. Pure thought produces pure spiritual influence, and unclear thought produces unclear remnants. Sleep itself is given to a person in order to lower the waste of thought, allowing the refined part to ascend and become a vehicle for spiritual communication.

Practical Takeaway:

Guard your thoughts during the day, because their residue becomes the material of your dreams and inner world. The more refined and elevated your thinking, the more your subconscious life becomes peaceful, meaningful, and spiritually constructive. Recognize that even fleeting thoughts have creative power; choose them with awareness and care.

Chassidic Story:

A chassid once came to R. Pinchas of Koretz and complained that his dreams disturbed him. He said they were filled with confusion and anxieties, and he feared they reflected something broken within him. R. Pinchas listened quietly and then asked, "Tell me, what fills your mind during the day?"

The chassid hesitated and admitted that although he learned regularly, much of his day was spent worrying about business, honor, and the opinions of others. R. Pinchas replied gently, "Your dreams do not come from nowhere. They are the shadows of your thoughts. If your mind is full of worry, your dreams will speak in the language of worry."

R. Pinchas then told him, "Begin each day with a clear thought for the sake of Heaven. Even one pure thought in the morning creates an angel of light. That angel will rise upward and later return to you at night, carrying peace instead of fear."

The chassid took the teaching to heart and began setting aside a moment each morning to think quietly about serving God with joy. Weeks later he returned, his face bright. "Rebbe," he said, "my dreams have changed."

R. Pinchas smiled. "When your thoughts ascend, your dreams follow." **END NOTE]**

Siman #44

"And Yaakov loved Rachel [etc.] and Rachel was barren" (Book of Genesis 29:18; and v. 31). When there is excessive love between a man and his wife—meaning that at no time is there any displeasure between them—this can sometimes cause a prevention of childbirth.

And this does not mean God forbid quarrel, for the greatness of peace between husband and wife is known. Rather, sometimes even a **be'ezir-tan zikh amol**, and even this only because of some mitzvah, becomes a segulah for childbirth.

וַיֵּאָהֱב יַעֲקֹב אֶת רָחֵל [וְגו'] וְרָחֵל עָקְרָה (כ"ט, י"ח);
כ"ט, ל"א). כְּשֵׁינִשׁ אֶהְבָּה יִתְיַרְה בֵּין אִישׁ לְאִשְׁתּוֹ
יוֹתֵר מִדִּי, דְּהִינּוּ שְׁלֵא יִהְיֶה בֵּינֵיהֶם בְּשׁוּם עֵת שׁוּם
הַקְפָּדָה (בְּל"א "א בְּעִזִּיר-טָאן זִיךְ אִמָּאֵל"), אֲזִי
לְפַעֲמִים הוּא מְנִיעַת הַהוֹלָדָה.

וְלֹא חֵס וְשְׁלוֹם קִטְטָה, כִּי גְדוֹל הַשְׁלוֹם שֶׁבֵּין אִישׁ
לְאִשְׁתּוֹ וְכִידוּעַ (בְּמִלְכ"ר י"ס, ז'), רַק לְפַעֲמִים אֶ
בְּעִזִּיר-טָאן"ט, וְאִפְלוּ גַם זֹאת בְּגִלָּל אִיזוּ מִצְוָה, וְזֶה
סְגוּלַת הַהוֹלָדָה.

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This is the meaning of: “And Yaakov loved Rachel and Rachel was barren.” And afterward (v. 33) “And Yaakov’s anger burned toward Rachel, and Rachel gave birth,” because that slight firmness opened the pathway for offspring.

וְזֶהוּ: וַיֵּאָהֵב יַעֲקֹב אֶת רָחֵל וְרָחֵל עָקְרָה, וְאַחֲכַי (ל"ג) וַיַּחַר אַף יַעֲקֹב בְּרָחֵל וַתֵּלֶד רָחֵל.

[NOTE Summary:

R. Pinchas of Koretz teaches that the verse “And Yaakov loved Rachel, and Rachel was barren” hints to a deep spiritual dynamic in marriage. When the love between husband and wife becomes excessively smooth, with no firmness, no moments of real accountability, and no emotional tension at all, this can paradoxically create a blockage that prevents new spiritual or physical growth. The text describes a state where there is so much seamless affection that nothing ever interrupts it — not even a moment of “א, בְּעִזִּיר־טָאן יֵיד אַמָּאל,” a small firmness or serious expression.

This does not mean, Heaven forbid, that conflict or strife is ever desirable. R. Pinchas emphasizes that peace in the home is one of the greatest values we possess. But perfect smoothness without any firmness can cause stagnation. Sometimes a small, constructive moment of seriousness — especially for the sake of a mitzvah — becomes a spiritual catalyst that opens the channels of blessing. This is the meaning of the Torah’s sequence: first “Yaakov loved Rachel, and Rachel was barren”; only later, after a moment of real emotional seriousness (“And Yaakov’s anger burned toward Rachel”), does Rachel give birth. That slight shift broke the stagnation and allowed blessing to flow.

Practical Takeaway:

True love in a relationship includes gentle honesty, accountability, and moments of sincere seriousness. Avoiding all firmness for the sake of “peace” can sometimes prevent growth. When expressed respectfully and for the right purpose, a brief moment of firmness can open new pathways of blessing and deepen the relationship rather than harm it.

Chassidic Story:

A chassid once came to R. Pinchas of Koretz and complained that although there was great affection and peace in his home, he and his wife had not been blessed with children. The man insisted that there was never a disagreement between them, never a stern word, never even a difficult moment. He believed this was a sign of perfect shalom bayis.

R. Pinchas listened quietly, then asked, “Tell me — is your peace alive or asleep?”

The man did not understand. R. Pinchas explained, “There is a peace that is living, where each partner helps the other rise higher. And there is a peace of quietness, where nothing is ever stirred. Life cannot grow in still water. Sometimes, a gentle wave is needed.”

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He encouraged the man to allow space for honest conversation, including moments where each could express needs, frustrations, and hopes — always with respect and love. The chassid returned months later, eyes shining, sharing that after opening their hearts with sincerity, his wife had become pregnant.

R. Pinchas smiled and said, “A peaceful home is a garden. Even a garden needs a touch of wind to make it grow.” **END NOTE]**

Siman #45

“And she called his name Reuven” (29:32). In the name of the holy Rav, of blessed memory, on Rashi: our Rabbis explained that she said, “See the difference between my son and the son of my father-in-law. Esav sold the birthright to Yaakov, but Reuven did not sell it to Yosef nor did he challenge it.

And not only did he not challenge it, but he even sought to pull Yosef out of the pit.” The difficulty: why does Rashi bring another reason besides what is written explicitly in the verse, “For Hashem has seen my affliction”?

He answered: Rashi’s intention is to resolve a precision: why by all the names of the tribes the reason is stated before the naming (“Because Hashem has heard... and she called his name Shimon,” and similarly with the others), yet here it says, “And she called his name Reuven,” and afterwards, “For she said, ‘Because Hashem has seen...’”?

But here it says “And she called his name Reuven,” and only afterwards gives the reason. The intention is that here the main reason was hidden, and she could not reveal it publicly. And what was the hidden reason?

Our Rabbis explained it — that it was connected to the future, that Reuven would one day save Yosef from the pit — but such a matter could not be revealed, since the episode of Yosef’s sale had to remain secret.

Therefore she called his name simply, without giving the true reason. Only when asked what her reason was did she provide an outer explanation — “Because Hashem has seen...” — as a way of deflecting. Whereas by the other tribes she revealed the reason before naming.

וּתְקַרָא שְׁמוֹ רְאוּבֵן (כ"ט, ל"ב). בְּשֵׁם הָרֵב זְכוּרֹנוּ לְבָרְכָה בְּרִשׁוֹ: רְבוּתֵינוּ פִּירְשׁוּ אִמָּרָה, רְאוּ מָה בֵּין בְּנֵי לְבִין חֲמִי, שְׁמֹכֵר הַבְּכוּרָה לִיעָקֹב, וְזֶה לֹא מְכָרָה לְיוֹסֵף וְלֹא עָרַר עָלֶיהָ

וְלֹא עוֹד שְׁלֹא עָרַר עָלֶיהָ, אֲלֵא שֶׁבִקֵּשׁ לְהוֹצִיאָו מִן הַבּוֹר. וְקִשָּׁה, לָמָּה לִיהָ לְרִשׁוֹ לְהַבִּיא טַעַם אַחֵר. מִמָּה שְׁמֹכֵר בְּפִסְיוֹק: כִּי רָאָה ה' בְּעֵנָי

וּתְיַרְצֵן: דְּכֹנֶנֶת רִשׁוֹ לְתַרְצֵן דְּקָדוּק שְׁיֵשׁ לְהַקְשׁוֹת: לָמָּה בְּשִׁמּוֹת כָּל הַשְּׁבָטִים מִפְּרִשׁ הַטַּעַם קוֹדֵם קְרִיאַת הַשֵּׁם “כִּי שָׁמַע ה' כִּי שָׁנוּאָה וְגו' וּתְקַרָא שְׁמוֹ, שְׁמַעוֹן” וְכֵן בְּשָׂאֵר הַבָּנִים

וְכָאן בְּתִיב: “וּתְקַרָא שְׁמוֹ רְאוּבֵן”, וְאַחֵר כֶּף בְּתִיב: “כִּי אִמָּרָה כִּי רָאָה וְגו'”. לָזֶה כֹּנֶנֶת רִשׁוֹ לְתַרְצֵן, דְּכָאן הָיָה לָהּ טַעַם הָעֵיקָר בְּנִסְתָּר, שְׁלֹא יִכְלָה לְגַלּוֹתוֹ לְכָל הָעוֹלָם

וּמָהוּ הַטַּעַם הַנִּסְתָּר? רְבוּתֵינוּ פִּירְשׁוּ וְכו', וְזֶה אֵי אִפְשָׁר לְגַלּוֹת, שְׁעֵתִיד רְאוּבֵן לְהַצִּיל אֶת יוֹסֵף מִן הַבּוֹר, דְּעָבָד דְּמַכִּירַת יוֹסֵף הָיָה צָרִיף לְהִיּוֹת בְּסוּד בְּיָדוּעַ

לָזֶה קְרָאָה שְׁמוֹ סֶתֶם בְּלִי נְתִינַת טַעַם, רַק בְּשִׁשְׁאֲלוֹהָ מֵאֵי טַעַמָּא לְנְתִינַת שֵׁם זֶה, אִמָּרָה לְדַחֲוִי בְּעֵלְמָא “כִּי רָאָה, וְזֶהוּ” כִּי אִמָּרָה וְגו'” מִשָּׂאִין בֵּן בְּשָׂאֵר שְׁמוֹת הַשְּׁבָטִים גָּלְתָה הַטַּעַם קוֹדֵם קְרִיאַת הַשֵּׁם, וְדוּ"ק

Reb Pinchas of Koretz

Imrie Pinchas

Parshas Vayeitzei

[NOTE Summary:

R. Pinchas of Koretz explains the deeper intention behind Rashi's comment on the naming of Reuven. The Torah usually presents the reason for a name *before* the name itself, as seen with Shimon and the other tribes. But with Reuven, the verse states, "She called his name Reuven," and **only afterward** gives the explanation "for she said, 'Because Hashem has seen my affliction.'"

This irregular structure signals that Leah had a **primary hidden reason** for the name, one that could not be made public. Our Sages reveal that this hidden reason related to a future event: Reuven would later save Yosef from the pit. Leah was inspired with prophetic clarity about her son's future righteousness, and this formed the true root of the name "Reuven" — "see the difference" between her son and Esav.

However, this reason could not be stated openly, because the entire episode of Yosef's sale had to remain concealed in the divine plan. Since she could not reveal the true meaning, she offered instead an external explanation: "Because Hashem has seen my affliction." This resolves Rashi's question: unlike the other tribes, the true reason here was intentionally hidden, so the Torah reverses the usual order.

Practical Takeaway:

Sometimes the deepest truths behind our actions, intentions, or blessings cannot be expressed openly. Not every spiritual insight is meant to be shared, and some matters must remain concealed until the proper time. Like Leah, we may offer an outer explanation while holding the inner truth quietly within the heart. **END NOTE]**

Siman #46

"And Yaakov went on his way, and angels of God met him"

(Book of Genesis 32:2). In the name of the Rav, of blessed memory, who was very strict that a person should not trouble himself or strain to force higher mystical attainments, but should serve God with simplicity.

And if he is truly worthy of attainment, then it will come to him on its own. And he, of blessed memory, told of a man who prayed to attain ruach ha-kodesh, and prayer accomplishes half (as it is said in the Midrash), and he attained a spirit without holiness.

He also said in the name of the Rav, of blessed memory, that this is the meaning of the verse: "And Yaakov went on his way, and angels of God met him." He did not run after this; rather, they came to him. And understand this well.

וַיַּעֲקֹב הָלַךְ לְדַרְכּוֹ וַיִּפְגְּעוּ בּוֹ מַלְאֲכֵי אֱלֹהִים (ל"ב, ב'). בְּשֵׁם הָרַב זְכוּרֵנוּ לְבִרְכָּה שֶׁהִקְפִּיד מְאֹד שֶׁלֹּא יִטְרִיחַ אָדָם עֲצָמוֹ לְכַנֵּנָה שִׁישִׁיג הַשְּׂגוּת עֲלִיוֹנוֹת, רַק יַעֲבֹד בְּתַמִּימוֹת

וְאִם יִהְיֶה תְּגִינ לַהֲשֻׁגָה, מִמִּילָא יִבֹּאוּ לוֹ. וְסִיפֵר הוּא זְכוּרֵנוּ לְבִרְכָּה מְאֻחָד שֶׁהִתְפַּלֵּל לְהִשְׁגִּי רוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ, וְהִתְפַּלֵּה עוֹשֶׂה מְחֻצָּה (וַיִּקְלַס לָכֵס י', ק'), וְהִשְׁגִּי רוּחַ בְּלִי קִדְּשָׁה.

עוֹד אָמַר בְּשֵׁם הָרַב זְכוּרֵנוּ לְבִרְכָּה שֶׁזֶּה פִּירוּשׁ הַפְּסוּק: וַיַּעֲקֹב הָלַךְ לְדַרְכּוֹ וַיִּפְגְּעוּ בּוֹ מַלְאֲכֵי אֱלֹהִים, וְלֹא שֶׁרָדַף הוּא אַחֵר זֶה, וְהִבִּין.

Reb Pinchas of Koretz

Imrie Pinchas

Parshas Vayeitzei

NOTE Summary:

R. Pinchas of Koretz teaches, in the name of his Rav, that a person must never force himself toward mystical experiences, spiritual visions, or elevated states of perception. Straining for “higher attainments” is spiritually dangerous and leads not to holiness but to illusion. True spiritual greatness comes only through sincere, straightforward service and inner simplicity. If a person is genuinely worthy of higher insight, Heaven will bring it to him naturally.

He recounts a case of a man who prayed intensely to attain ruach hakodesh. Since prayer has real power — “prayer accomplishes half” — he indeed received a kind of spiritual experience, but it was a “spirit without holiness,” an impure or misleading inspiration, demonstrating that forced mystical pursuits can backfire.

This is the meaning of the verse: “And Yaakov went on his way, and angels of God met him.” Yaakov did not chase after angels or mystical encounters. He simply walked his path with integrity, and the angels came to him on their own. The true path is not the pursuit of visions, but the quiet, honest service that makes one worthy of them without chasing them.

Practical Takeaway:

Do not pursue spiritual experiences for their own sake, and do not force mystical states through intensity or pressure. Serve with sincerity, humility, and calmness. If elevated experiences are appropriate for you, they will come at the right time, without being pursued.

END NOTE]