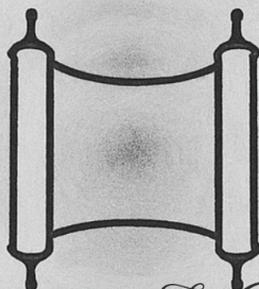


בס"ד

**Reb Pinchas of Koretz**

**Imrie Pinchas**

**Parshas Ki Teitzei**



*Dedicated In Honor  
of the Yahrzeit (Yud Elul) For:*

לע"נ

הרב הקדוש הצדיק המפורסם

רבי פנחס בן הרב רבי אברהם אבא זצ"ל

מקאריץ

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## Reb Pinchas of Koretz

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### Introduction

This collection of teachings, centered around the insights of **Rabbi Pinchas of Koretz**, draws a powerful map of the inner battlefield of the soul. Through profound interpretations of verses such as “*Timcheh es zecher Amalek*” and “*Lo tishkach*,” the spiritual struggle is reframed as an internal war against **anger, arrogance**, and other destructive traits.

Rooted in the school of the **Baal Shem Tov**, these teachings present a deeply personal lens: Amalek is not merely an external enemy, but a force embedded in our emotional reflexes, our pride, and our forgetfulness of Hashem. Anger is shown to be a branch of arrogance; arrogance itself is revealed to be the spiritual root of forgetfulness. When a person removes ego and submits their will, they clear space for the Shechinah to dwell within.

We are taught that every nation mentioned in Torah represents a corresponding evil trait, and each must be uprooted to reach one’s internal *Eretz Yisrael*—a state of inner peace and alignment with Hashem. This journey of inner conquest begins with speech (*Sichon*), continues through thought (*Og*), and culminates in the eradication of Amalek: a consciousness free of ego and rage.

Throughout these segments, Rabbi Pinchas of Koretz and his companions like **Rabbi Shmaryahu of Warshavik** and **Rabbi Gershon of Kitov** do not speak in abstract terms. Their words press us to become warriors in the hidden battlefield of the heart. True Avodah is not loud or showy—it is subtle, quiet, disciplined. Whether through a silent restraint against outburst, or the steady pursuit of humility, each effort is a blow against Amalek within.

### Siman # 429

**"You shall surely send away the mother, and the young you shall take for yourself" (Deuteronomy 22:7).**

שְׁלַח תְּשַׁלַּח אֶת הָאֵם וְאֶת הַבָּנִים תִּקַּח לָךְ (כ"ג, ז').

And our Sages expounded in the Midrash (Vayikra Rabbah 3:6): If you do not have children—take for yourself; through this mitzvah you will merit children.

וְדָרְשׁוּ רַז"ל בַּמִּדְרָשׁ (וַיִּקְרָא רַבֵּה ג, ו): אִם אֵין לָךְ בָּנִים – תִּקַּח לָךְ, עַל יְדֵי מִצְוָה זוֹ תִזְכֶּה לְבָנִים.

And he said, therefore, those who are barren should read the section of the mitzvah of sending away the nest, so that it will be considered as if they fulfilled this mitzvah.

וְאָמַר, שְׁלַחְךָ יֵשׁ לְחֲשׂוֹכֵי בָנִים לְקִרְוֹת פְּרִישָׁת שִׁילּוּחַ הַקֵּן, שְׂיָהָא נִחְשָׁב כְּאִלּוּ קָיָם מִצְוָה זוֹ.

#### [NOTE Summary:

This brief teaching highlights the spiritual power of the mitzvah of **Shiluach Haken**—sending away the mother bird before taking the young. The Midrash (Vayikra Rabbah 3:6) teaches that even one who has no children can merit them through the performance of this mitzvah. Furthermore, even if one is unable to

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physically fulfill the mitzvah, reading the Torah section about it is considered as if one has done so. This transforms the mitzvah into an avenue of hope and blessing, especially for those struggling with childlessness.

### Practical Takeaway:

If you or someone you know is yearning for children, regularly reading the parsha of *Shiluach Haken* with sincerity can be spiritually beneficial. It demonstrates the Torah's sensitivity to longing and the power of heartfelt connection to mitzvos—even through learning and reading. **END NOTE]**

## Siman # 430

**One shall not take as security the millstone or the upper millstone (Deuteronomy 24:6).**

(לא יחבל רחיים ורקב כ"ד, ו')

In the name of the Rav, of blessed memory: In Targum Yonasan it says—do not bind a bridegroom and bride through sorcery.

ב"שם הרב ז"ל, בתרגום יונתן: לא תאסור חתן וכלה על ידי כישוף.

And it is difficult: from where did Yonasan derive to translate it this way?

וקשה, מנין ליה ליונתן לתרגם כן.

And he answered: for throughout that whole passage, every matter in the parsha is written as its own section.

ותירץ, דאיתא בכל הסדרא הדיא כל ענין בפרשה בפני עצמו.

But here it is written: “When a man takes a new wife” and “one shall not take a millstone as collateral”—both in direct succession, in one parsha.

וכאן קתיב: כי יקח איש אשה חדשה ולא יחבל רחיים – שניהם בסמיכות בפרשה אחת.

From this, we learn they are connected to each other.

שמע מינה ששייך זה לזה.

### [NOTE Summary:

This teaching begins with the verse “One shall not take as security the millstone or the upper millstone” and explores a surprising interpretation from Targum Yonasan, which translates the verse as a prohibition against using sorcery to separate a bride and groom. The question is raised: where does Targum Yonasan derive such a reading? The answer lies in the structure of the Torah portion. Unlike the rest of the parsha, where each law stands alone, this verse appears directly after the verse about a man taking a new wife. The unusual proximity between these two verses implies a thematic connection, suggesting that the prohibition against harming a couple through sorcery is embedded in the juxtaposition.

### Practical Takeaway:

When the Torah places two ideas together, it is inviting us to see their deeper relationship. Sometimes the Torah's wisdom is hidden in structure, not just content. Pay close attention to what precedes and follows a mitzvah—it may reveal a profound message about its meaning. **END NOTE]**

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### Siman # 431

**“And you were weary and exhausted, and did not fear God”  
(Deuteronomy 25:18).**

(וְאַתָּה עָיֵף וְיָגַע וְלֹא יָרָא אֱלֹהִים (כ"ה), י"ח)

In the name of the Rav, Rabbi Zusha of Anipoli:

[בְּשֵׁם הַרֵב רַבֵּי זוֹשָׁא [מְאַנְיפּוֹלִי]

The explanation is: there is a person who toils greatly in serving  
God until he becomes weary,

פִּירוּשׁ, יֵשׁ אָדָם שֶׁמְיַגַּע אֶת עַצְמוֹ בְּעִבּוּדַת הַשֵּׁם עַד  
לְשִׁנְעוּשָׁה עָיֵף

and nonetheless, he still lacks fear of Heaven.

וּמְקַל מְקוֹם אֵין בּוֹ יִרְאַת שָׁמַיִם

#### [NOTE Summary:

This teaching cites the verse “And you were weary and exhausted, and did not fear God,” and interprets it in the name of Rabbi Zusha of Anipoli. He explains that it is possible for a person to expend great effort in serving God—to labor in prayer, mitzvos, and learning—and still lack true fear of Heaven. The verse warns that spiritual exhaustion alone is not a sign of holiness if it is not accompanied by genuine yiras Shamayim (awe and reverence for God).

#### Practical Takeaway:

Don’t mistake religious effort for spiritual depth. It is possible to be deeply busy in mitzvos and still miss the point if there is no awe of Heaven. Cultivate inner reverence, not just outer labor. **END NOTE]**

### Siman # 432

**“You shall erase the memory of Amalek from under the  
heavens. Do not forget” (Deuteronomy 25:19).**

תִּמְחָה אֶת זְכַר עַמְלֵק מִתַּחַת הַשָּׁמַיִם לֹא תִשְׁכַּח  
(כ"ה, י"ט)

Behold, the primary positive trait is humility and lowliness,  
especially on Rosh Hashanah, as it says: “the more a person  
bows, the better” (see Zohar II:20b),

הִנֵּה עֹקֵר הַמִּדּוֹת הַטּוֹבוֹת הִיא עֲנוּהַ וְשִׁפְלוּת, בְּפֶרֶט  
בְּרֵאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה כַּמָּה דְּכִיּוּף אֵינֶשׁ טָפִי מַעְלֵי (עֵין ר"ז ס'  
, כ', כ')

and this is the sweetening of judgments—when a person is by  
himself “nothing,” as explained elsewhere in the name of the  
Rav, of blessed memory.

וְהוּא הַמְתַּקֵּת הַדִּינִין כְּשֶׁאָדָם אֶצֶל עַצְמוֹ אֵין, כְּמוֹ  
לְשִׁנְתִּיבְאָר בְּמְקוֹם אַחֵר בְּשֵׁם הַרֵב ז"ל

And there are three severe aspects to arrogance:

:וְיֵשׁ בַּחֲמַר הַגְּאוּנָה ג' דְּבָרִים

One: Rabbi Shlomo of Hyssin, of blessed memory, said in the  
name of the Baal Shem Tov, that regarding all other sins it is  
written (Leviticus 16:16), “Who dwells with them in their  
impurity”—even though they are impure, the Divine Presence is  
among them (Yoma 56b),

א' אָמַר רַבֵּי שְׁלֹמֹה [מֵהַיִּסּוּיִן] ז"ל בְּשֵׁם הַבַּעַל שֵׁם  
טוֹב, דְּבִכָּל הַעֲבִירוֹת כְּתִיב (וַיִּקְרָא ט"ז, ט"ז) הַשֶּׁכֶן  
אִתָּם בְּתוֹךְ טְמֵאָתָם, אִף עַל פִּי שֶׁהֵם טְמֵאִים שְׂכִינָה  
(בִּינְיָהֶם) (יוֹמָא נ"ו, ב')

whereas with arrogance, “He and I cannot dwell together”  
(Sotah 5a).

מָה שְׂאִין כֹּן בְּגְאוּנָה – אֵין אֲנִי וְהוּא יְכוּלִין לְדוֹר  
(סוֹטָה ה, א)

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<p>Two: Rabbi Nachum of Chernobyl, of blessed memory, said in the name of the Baal Shem Tov, that most madmen become insane due to arrogance.</p>	<p>הב' אָמַר רַבֵּי נַחֻם [מְטוֹשְׁרֵנְאָבִיל] ז"ל בְּשֵׁם הַבַּעַל שֵׁם טוֹב, שְׂרוּב מְשֻׁגְעִים נַעֲשִׂים מְשֻׁגְעִים מְחַמֵּת גְּאֻנָּה,</p>
<p>For they were very haughty, and when they were once unable to fulfill their inflated self-image or pride, through that they became insane.</p>	<p>שְׁהָיוּ גְּדוּלְנִים גְּדוּלִים, וּפְעַם אַחַת שָׁלֵא יָכְלוּ לְגַמֹּר גְּאֻנָּתָם – וַיִּירָעַר גְּדוּלוֹת אוֹיְסְפִירָן – עַל יְדֵי זֶה נִשְׁתַּגְּעוּ.</p>
<p>And he, of blessed memory, said (may his memory protect us) that he told this before the sons of the Rav, of blessed memory, and they asked him whether he heard this directly from Rabbi Nachum of Chernobyl, of blessed memory, and he said yes. And to them this was an extremely precious matter.</p>	<p>וְאָמַר הוּא ז"ל זִי"ע שְׁסַפֵּר זֶה בְּפָנָי בְּנֵי הַרֵב ז"ל וְשָׁאָלוּ אוֹתוֹ אִם שָׁמַע בְּעַצְמוֹ מִרַבֵּי נַחֻם [מְטוֹשְׁרֵנְאָבִיל] ז"ל, וְאָמַר הוּ, וְהָיָה זֶה אֶצְלָם דְּבָר יָקָר מְאֹד מְאֹד.</p>
<p>Three: I say that with all sins, there must be some cause or circumstance that enables the person to sin, and such circumstances do not always arise.</p>	<p>הִגִּי אוֹמֵר אֲנִי, דְּלִכְל הַעֲבִירוֹת צְרִיךְ אֵינָהּ גְּלוּל וְסִבָּה שֶׁיַּעֲשֶׂה בַּעֲבוּרָה הַעֲבִירָה, וְלֹא כָּל פְּעַם נִזְדַּמְּן הַסִּבָּה.</p>
<p>But with arrogance—even a poor man lying on his bed in darkness, with nothing and not even a candle—nonetheless, he can still be arrogant in his heart, saying, “I am a great man,” etc.</p>	<p>מִה שְׁאִין כּוֹן גְּאֻנָּה – אֶפְלוּ עָנִי וְשׁוֹכֵב עַל מִשְׁכְּבוֹ בַּחֲשֵׁךְ וְאִין עֲמוֹ שׁוֹם דְּבָר וְלֹא נֵר, אֶפְלוּ הָכִי מִתְנַאֲהַה בְּלִבּוֹ: אֲנִי אֲדָם גְּדוּל וְגו'.</p>
<p>Therefore it is severe, for this transgression can always be present.</p>	<p>לְכַף הוּא חֲמוּר – שֶׁיִּכּוֹל לְהִיּוֹת תָּמִיד עֲבִירָה זוֹ.</p>
<p>And behold, it was said in the name of the Baal Shem Tov, of blessed memory, that the nations of the world correspond to the evil traits within a person.</p>	<p>וְהִנֵּה אָמְרוּ בְּשֵׁם הַבַּעַל שֵׁם טוֹב ז"ל דְּהֵאוּמוֹת הַעוֹלָם הֵם הַמְּדוּת רְעוּת שְׁבָאָדָם,</p>
<p>And each nation has a grasp on a particular bad trait, and when a person rectifies his character traits, he does not fear any nation.</p>	<p>וְכָל אוּמָה יֵשׁ לָהּ אַחֲזִיזָה בְּמַדָּה רְעָה אַחַת, וּכְשֶׁאֲדָם מְתַקֵּן מְדוּתוֹ אֵז אֵינּוּ מִתְנַרָא מִשׁוּם אוּמָה.</p>
<p>And Rabbi Shmaryahu [of Warshavik] said, of blessed memory (רנ"ג), that Amalek corresponds to the trait of anger.</p>	<p>וְאָמַר רַבֵּי שְׁמַעְרִיל [וואַרְשָׁוויקער] ז"ל רנ"ג דַּעֲמֵלֵק הוּא מְדַת הַכַּעַס.</p>
<p>And Rabbi Gershon [of Kitov], of blessed memory, asked him: From where do you know this?</p>	<p>וְשָׁאָלוּ לוֹ רַבֵּי גֵרְשׁוֹן [מְקִיטוֹב] ז"ל מִמֵּינֵן לָךְ הָאִי וְהַשֵּׁיב, דְּכַתִּיב (תְּהִלִּים ל, ו) כִּי רָגַע בְּאָפוֹ – “רָגַע” ר"ת ר' אֲשִׁית ג'וֹיִם ע'מֶלֶק (כְּמִדְּנִיר כ"ד, כ'). וְהוּא ז"ל אָמַר שָׁנָה כְּתוּב בְּפִירוּשׁ אֶצְל עֶשׂוֹ (עָמוֹס א, י"א): וְעִבְרָתוֹ שְׁמָרָה נְצַח, הִינֵנוּ כַּעַס.</p>
<p>And he answered: For it is written (Psalms 30:6), “For His anger is but for a moment.” The word “moment” (רִגְעַ) is an acronym for ר' אֲשִׁית ג'וֹיִם ע'מֶלֶק, and he said that this is stated explicitly regarding Esav (Amos 1:11), “And he kept his wrath forever,” meaning anger.</p>	<p>וְכַשְׁרָצָה רַבֵּי שְׁמַעְרִיל [וואַרְשָׁוויקער] ז"ל לִיסַע לְאַרְצֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, דִּיבֵר</p>

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“What sense is there in traveling to the Land of Israel just like that? Rather, first one must become a level of ‘Land of Israel’ here.”

וכי מה ענינו ליסע לארץ ישראל סתם כך, אלא  
בתחילה צריך להיות בכאן בחינת ארץ ישראל

The meaning is: to turn one's earthy nature into a level of “Yisrael”—that is, to break all the bad traits within him.

פירוש, שיעשה מבחינת ארץ – ארציות, שיהא  
בחינת ישראל, דהיינו לשבר כל המדות רעות  
שבקרבו.

(And this he heard, of blessed memory, from Rabbi Dovid, the son of Rabbi Shmaryahu, who said it in the name of his father. From this point on, he heard it himself.)

ונה שמע הוא ז"ל מרבי דוד בנו של רבי שמערייל  
ז"ל שאמר בשם אביו, ומכאן נאילך שמע הוא ז"ל  
(בעצמו.)

And before entering the Land of Israel, there is the crossing of the Jordan—that is, the land of Sichon and Og. “Sichon” is interpreted as pleasant speech—meaning, to rectify one’s speech.

וקדם ארץ ישראל יש עבר הירדן, היינו ארץ סיחון  
ועוג. ו”סיחון” הוא שיחה נאה, דהיינו לתקן  
הדיבור.

And “Og king of Bashan” is numerically equivalent to “machshavah” (thought). (And it seems to me that this refers to the word “Bashan” itself, with its three letters, being equal in gematria to “machshavah.”)

ו”עוג מלך הבשן” הוא בגימטריא “מחשבה”  
(ונראה לי, דר”ל “בשן” עם ג, אותיותיו בגימטריא  
“מחשבה”).

Meaning: to rectify one's thoughts. Then he is close to the Land of Israel.

דהיינו לתקן מחשבתו. ואז הוא קרוב לארץ ישראל.

After that comes the land of the seven nations, in which all negative traits are included.

ואחר כך ארץ הז' עמין, ובהם נכלליון כל המדות

For each ministering prince includes ten aspects, as is written in the Kavanot of Hoshana Rabbah (see *Maseches HaKoleis* 146:20).

פי כל שר כולל יו”ד שרים, כמו שכתוב בכונות  
(הושענא רבה) (מספרת הקולט קמ”ו, כ’

Therefore, through them are included all seventy nations.

נמצא בזה נכלליון כל העי”ן

And he said to me, of blessed memory, that Rabbi Shmaryahu began to explain that the “Canaanite” corresponds to the trait of arrogance, as in the root *kiniah* (submission), etc.

ואמר לי ז”ל דהתחיל רבי שמערייל ז”ל לפרש  
דכנעני הוא נגד מדת גאווה, מלשון כניעה וכו’ רנ”ד

And the rest he did not remember, and he said that every person on his own can complete the rest.

והשאר אינו זוכר, ואמר דכל אדם בעצמו יכול לגמר  
השאר וכו’

And behold, it is written in the sefer *Shaarei Kedusha* by the Rav Rabbi Chaim Vital, of blessed memory (Part 3, Gate 4), that anger is a branch of arrogance.

והנה איתא בספר שערי קדושה לרב רבי חיים ויטאל  
ז”ל (מ”ג שער ד’) שבעס הוא ענף מן הגאווה

For a person becomes angry only because he is arrogant; therefore, when things do not go his way, he becomes angry.

פי מה שאדם כועס – הוא רק מפני שמתגאה בעצמו,  
לכן כשאינו נעשה כרצונו – הוא כועס

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And it is written in the *Sefer Mitzvos Gadol* (negative commandments 130), that he counted all the mitzvos but did not count arrogance among the negative commandments.

ואיתא בקסמ"ג (לאוין קל) דמנה כל המצוות ולא מנה הגאונה ללאו.

And they said to him in a dream at night: "You forgot the main thing," etc.

ואמרו לו בחלום הלילה: שכחת העקר כו'.

And he went back and wrote arrogance from the verse (Deuteronomy 8:14): "And your heart will become haughty, and you will forget."

וקור וכתב הגאונה מפסוק (דברים ח, י"ד): ורם לבבך ושכחת.

And it is written (Deuteronomy 6:12): "Beware lest you forget," and the word "beware" (*hishamer*) indicates a prohibition.

וכתוב (דברים ו, י"ב): השמר לך פן תשכח, "השמר" הוא לא תעשה (עבודה זרה ל"ו, א').

It turns out that arrogance causes one to forget Hashem.

נמצא – הגאונה משכח את השי"ת.

And anger is a branch of arrogance, and it is the aspect of Amalek.

והפעם הוא ענף מהגאונה, והוא בחינת עמלק.

And this is the meaning of "You shall erase the memory of Amalek"—that is, anger and arrogance—and through this, "you shall not forget" Hashem.

וזהו: תמחה את זכר עמלק – היינו פעם וגאונה – ועל ידי כן לא תשכח את השי"ת, וזה שמסים: לא תשכח.

And this too is the explanation of the verse (Exodus 17:16): "A war for Hashem against Amalek from generation to generation."

וזה גם כן פירוש הפסוק (שמות י"ז, ט"ז): מלחמה לה' בעמלק מדור דור.

The meaning is: there is a battle within a person—whether Hashem will rest upon him or, Heaven forbid, the opposite, the aspect of Amalek.

ר"ל שיש מלחמה אצל האדם אם ישנה עליו השי"ת, או חס ושלום להיפך בחינת עמלק.

For "He and I cannot dwell together," etc., and this is the battle in every generation.

כי "אין אני והוא יכולין לדור" כו', וזה המלחמה בכל דור ודור.

(There is uncertainty whether this is from Rabbi Shmaryahu, of blessed memory, for I have now heard that it is from Rabbi Gershon of Kitov, of blessed memory.)

ויש ספק בזה אם הוא מרבי שמערייל ז"ל, כי (עכשיו שמעתי שהוא מרבי גרשון מקיטוב ז"ל).

## Reb Pinchas of Koretz

Imrie Pinchas

Parshas Ki Teitzei

### [NOTE Summary:

In this rich collection of teachings—some directly attributed to Rabbi Pinchas of Koretz and others from his contemporaries—the core theme is the war against arrogance and anger, both understood as manifestations of Amalek. Drawing from *Shaarei Kedusha*, the *Sefer Mitzvos Gadol*, and the Baal Shem Tov's school, the discourse links the command to "erase the memory of Amalek" to the personal spiritual task of eradicating arrogance (*gaavah*) and anger (*ka'as*) from the soul.

Anger is described as a mere outgrowth of ego. A person becomes angry not due to injustice, but because their inflated self-image has been challenged. Arrogance distances the Divine Presence, unlike other sins where Hashem remains with the sinner in their impurity. In a striking account, the *Semag* was corrected in a dream for omitting *gaavah* from the list of biblical prohibitions, with verses like “וְיָרֵם לְבָבָהּ וְשָׁכַחְתָּ” establishing it as a root sin that causes forgetting Hashem.

The teachings also expand upon the metaphor of Amalek as a persistent inner adversary: *a war for Hashem against Amalek from generation to generation*. The inner struggle of whether Hashem can dwell within us depends on removing ego, for “He and I cannot dwell together.”

A profound interpretation by Rabbi Shmaryahu (possibly heard by Rabbi Pinchas) links the seven Canaanite nations to various evil traits within the soul. One must first conquer “Sichon” (refined speech) and “Og” (rectified thought) before entering their own internal "Eretz Yisrael," representing a purified soul. Every nation parallels a middah ra'ah, and self-refinement eliminates the power those forces have over us.

### Practical Takeaway:

To fulfill the command of “*erase the memory of Amalek*” in our own lives, we must root out anger and arrogance—two forces that prevent Divine presence and clarity. By transforming speech, thought, and emotional reflexes, we create space for Hashem to dwell within us. The journey to spiritual Eretz Yisrael begins with humility and inner repair.

### Chassidic Story:

Rabbi Pinchas of Koretz once encountered a man known for his harsh temper and pious external appearance. Rather than rebuking him, Rabbi Pinchas said, “A man who fears Heaven need not shout to prove it. If fire burns from within, there's no need for smoke.” The man later returned in tears, confessing that his religious zeal had masked deep arrogance. Rabbi Pinchas taught him to begin with silence—to practice holding back even when right. Over time, the man became known for his restraint and humility, a living example of “erasing Amalek.”

**Source:** *Imrei Pinchas*, Warsaw 1913 edition, p. 2 **END NOTE]**