

Unseen Existences Online Book Study

Week 5: Chapter 5

1. This chapter opens describing “the pilgrimage of the soul as a journey in prayer. To pray is to traffic in another world—the world of angels, departed saints, and the living God.” Reflect on this.
2. What are some of the ways we allow guile (deceit) into our lives, even unintentionally? What might our motives be in these cases? What are some other words for guile?
3. Nathanael is stunned that Jesus already knew him before they ever spoke face-to-face. Does the reality that God completely sees your hidden thoughts, flaws, and private moments bring you more comfort, or does it bring you a sense of anxiety?
4. In scripture, the “fig tree” often represents a place of private retreat or deep contemplation. Why do you think modern culture makes it so difficult for us to have quiet, “fig tree” spaces where we aren’t performing for an audience?
5. Jesus references Jacob’s ladder, promising that we will see “heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending....” How do you see Jesus bridging the gap between what is seen and what is unseen?
6. Can you think of something that has served as a “thin place” in your life?
7. “As the figs on the tree do not ripen all at once, so too, with matters of Torah.” (pg 79) Are you aware of this being true in your own life?
8. The story of Jacob wrestling with an angel finally “broke him”—his hip and his guile. Have you had any similar experiences?