



RABBI SHALOM

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ROSH BAIS MEDRASH ENGLISH SPEAKING PROGRAM MACHON LEV

Seeing the Light Beyond the Darkness

וְעַתָּה יֵרָא פַרְעֹה אִישׁ נָבוֹן וְחָכָם וְיִשְׁתַּהוּ עַל-אַרְץ מִצְרַיִם:

“So now, let Pharaoh seek out a man of discernment and wisdom and put him in charge of the land of Egypt.” (Bereishit 41:33)

After Yosef interprets Pharaoh’s dreams to his satisfaction, he goes a step further—offering unsolicited advice. He recommends that Pharaoh appoint “a man of discernment and wisdom” to oversee the land, ensuring that during the seven years of plenty Egypt would prepare for the seven years of famine.

This move is startling. Yosef has just been taken from prison to interpret Pharaoh’s dream. Who gave him the right—or the nerve—to lecture Pharaoh on how to

manage the country? Such audacity could easily have offended Pharaoh, sending Yosef straight back to the dungeon. Why take such a risk?

The *Shemen HaTov* offers a striking explanation. Both of Pharaoh’s dreams convey the same fundamental message: when God grants success, one must preserve it for the future. Blessing is not meant to be totally consumed in the present but to be safeguarded for the challenges ahead. The imagery of the thin cows devouring the fat cows, yet showing no sign of fullness, warns against squandering present abundance until nothing remains for tomorrow. God, in His kindness, sends the *refuah*—the cure—before the *makkah*, the illness, and it is our task to respond wisely to that providence.

Yosef recognizes that this insight is not external to the dream’s interpretation but integral to it. Pharaoh’s dream does not only foretell events; it teaches a divine principle about life and leadership. And in that moment, Yosef perceives something even deeper: perhaps his own personal descent into Egypt—his betrayal, slavery, and imprisonment—has likewise been part of a providential design. God had positioned him precisely where he needed to be to ensure the survival of his family and the birth of the Jewish nation in Egypt.

With this awareness, Yosef finds his voice and confidence. He is not overstepping his place; he is stepping into it. He is fulfilling

May the learning
in this week’s Torah Tidbits
be dedicated לעילוי נשמת

Ronald Markowitz ז"ל
ראובן בן ברוך ז"ל

Sorely missed by
his family and friends

the very destiny that God had woven through his suffering. Yosef was, in a sense, *living the dream*—literally and figuratively. Pharaoh's dreams revealed to Yosef the meaning of his own.

CHANUKAH – LIGHT WITHIN DARKNESS

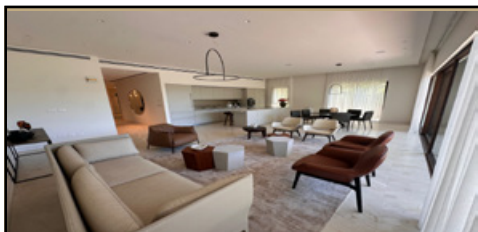
A similar idea shines through the story of Chanukah. Unlike Purim or Pesach, Chanukah has no dedicated book in Tanakh. The Rambam, in *Hilchot Chanukah*, recounts its story because it exists only within the realm of Torah Shebe'al Peh—our oral tradition. Perhaps this itself conveys a message: Chanukah belongs to the hidden, whispered voice of exile.

The light of the Chanukah menorah is not the blazing sun of redemption but the small, persistent flame that defies darkness. It teaches us how to live in *galut*—to kindle faith in the night, to illuminate despair with hope. Even the very name *Chanukah* (חנוכה) shares a root with *chinuch* (חינוך), “education” or “preparation.” Chanukah educates the Jewish soul to see meaning within suffering and to prepare for spiritual endurance in foreign lands.

SEEING THE LIGHT

Yosef and Chanukah share a single message. Yosef's imprisonment became the path to his greatness. The darkness of Greek oppression gave birth to the eternal light of Chanukah. In both, God's salvation arrived disguised as struggle.

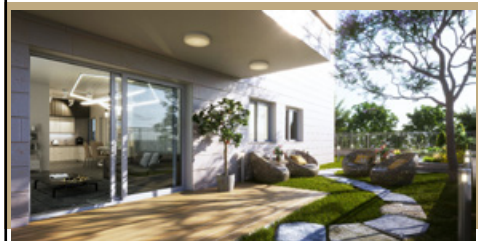
May we learn, like Yosef, to see the larger picture—to recognize that even in the most confusing chapters of our lives, Hashem is guiding the story. And like the menorah's flame, may we never cease to shine—transforming every moment of darkness into preparation for a brighter future. ■



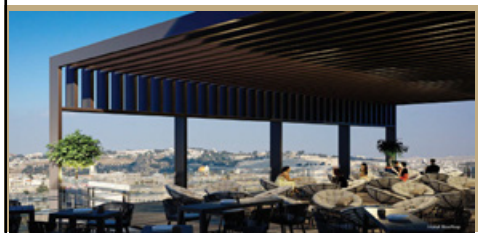
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