



אור בישראל

A LIGHT FROM WITHIN ISRAEL פרשת מקץ

כ"ז כסלו תשפ"ה 28.12.24

עם סיוון רהם-נארי

1 Happy Chanukkah! On Friday this week, we will first light the Chanukkah candles (three candles) and then the Shabbat candles. So much light will illuminate the world.

At the end of Shabbat - we will light both the Havdalah candle and the Chanukkah menorah (four candles).

4 In this week's Parsha as well, Parshat Miketz which appears in the Book of Genesis, light begins to shine - Yosef is in prison in Egypt, in a dark and difficult situation. But during the parsha, he emerges from there, interprets Pharaoh king of Egypt's dreams, and becomes a very senior figure in the Egyptian kingdom. Shabbat Shalom and Happy Chanukkah.

3 Yosef's brothers arrive in Egypt to obtain food during a time of famine. Our commentators explain that our forefather Yaakov sent with them a melody, a song of the Land of Israel, hoping that perhaps Yosef would hear these sounds and become homesick and return to the family. Our story this week also deals with the importance of Jewish melody, of family singing.

A STORY FOR SHABBAT

THE DAY MY FATHER SANG

"I'll be driving to a faraway city today, David. Would you like to come along for the ride?" Rabbi Shalom Mashash asked his son, who was quick to agree.

Rabbi Shalom Mashash was the chief rabbi of Morocco. He dedicated most of his time to learning Torah, teaching, responding to complicated halachic questions, and writing books.

David was delighted to spend time with his father. He was sure that his father would want to learn with him during the long ride. Maybe his father would test him on what he was learning in school or share a difficult halachic issue that he was thinking about. Or maybe he would even teach him something new.

So David was very surprised when he sat down in the front seat next to his father and he suggested that... they sing together. Rav Mashash started to sing a prayer with these words: "You are the only One - my spirit and soul desire You and long to praise Your name."

Rav Mashash explained the words of the song, sang it himself, and then asked David to sing along. David was sure that once they finished singing the song they would start to learn, but when the song was over—his father went back to the beginning and started to sing it again. They sang the same words again and again. "We sang together for a long time," David recounts, "words of faith, devotion, and joy. Until this day, this song echoes in my head and remains in my heart. This was an amazing childhood experience that I will never forget: my father, the learned rabbi and scholar, taking time to sing with his son.

(From the "Ligdol" book series)

Food for thought

Listening to music affects us differently than studying; words speak to the brain, while music enters directly into the heart and soul. Rav Mashash knew this and purposely chose to sing with his son so that he would never forget this experience.

Do we realize the tremendous impact of the music we listen to? If so, what kinds of songs should we choose?





FROM THE DIARY OF A CHEMED STUDENT

Finding Light in The Darkness

Being a student during a war is no easy task. The war stirs up in all of us a flood of emotions—fear, anger, and so many more strong feelings. Like many others, I've been forced to discover new sides of myself—some I've embraced, and some I haven't. We're expected to carry on as if life is normal, but how can anyone do that with so much chaos all around us?

Disruptions to my routine are nothing new. My education has been unstable since 8th grade, first with Corona and now the war. And yet, the war taught me the value of stability. It made me realize that I can strive to not just survive the war, but to grow and learn from it.



And so, I tried. I discovered that although I've seen humanity's worst, I've also seen its best.

I've learned about compassion, gentleness, and even spontaneity. Most importantly, the war shifted my perspective. Instead of asking, "What can I achieve?" I now ask, "What can I give?" As Napoleon Hill said, "Every adversity, every failure, every heartache carries with it the seed of an equal or greater benefit." May we all find those seeds of light and let them guide us through life's challenges.

Nitzan Gamla, 12 grade, Ulpenat Golan Katzrin



THREE BLESSINGS, THREE HOPES: A SPECIAL MESSAGE FOR CHANUKKAH 5785

"Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to kindle the Chanukkah light." Sometimes it seems that darkness rules. In face of the darkness in the world, Chanukkah reminds us not to despair from the darkness and to light our own light. According to Jewish law, we first light one candle, and then each day add another candle. We add a little more light to the world, and in the end, the eternal good light overcomes the temporary darkness and evil.

"Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who performed miracles for our ancestors in those days at this time." The Chashmonaim acted and fought and did their best, but they also prayed for spiritual help, for a miracle, for heavenly success. On Simchat Torah we were surprised for the worst, the absolute worst, and on Chanukkah we ask to be surprised for the better, for the absolute best. That everyone will return safely. That we'll merit victory, security, unity, the elimination of evil, healing, and comfort. Every year this is considered a special time for prayers, beside the Chanukkah candles. This year there is so much and so many to pray for.

"Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this season." Only on the first evening do we add to the two regular blessings also the blessing of **"Shehecheyanu,"** for life itself, for receiving another year of life - to act and do good in the world.

Around the Table

- In what ways do significant events influence our approach to life?
- How can the question "What can I give?" help us in everyday life, especially during challenging times?
- When do you think a small act (like lighting a candle) becomes meaningful? Give examples.



דף הפרשה מוקדש לעילוי
נשמת החיילים הקדושים
מיכאל בן חמו ואייל טויטו הי"ד

