Miketz: Torah Nugget

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Parashat Miketz is the moment when Joseph's life turns. He goes from forgotten prisoner to second in command of Egypt almost overnight. But the deeper transformation has been happening for a long time.

Joseph has always been a dreamer. We meet him first as a teenager, full of certainty, eager to tell his brothers dreams that place him at the center. Those early dreams are loud, unfiltered, and strikingly God free. Joseph believes in his own insight, his own destiny, and the result is disaster. A pit. Slavery. Prison.

And then, slowly, something changes.

When Joseph encounters the dreams of the cupbearer and the baker, his language shifts. “Surely God can interpret dreams,” he says. By the time he stands before Pharaoh in this week’s parashah, Joseph is clear and restrained. “Not I,” he says. “God will see to Pharaoh’s welfare.” Rashi notices that moment. Joseph no longer claims wisdom as his own. He understands himself as a vessel.

That shift is everything.

Joseph does not just interpret Pharaoh’s dreams. He takes responsibility for them. He plans. He prepares. He thinks about consequences and about people who will suffer years down the road. His insight becomes action, and his action saves lives, including the lives of the brothers who once betrayed him.

The rabbis teach that the power of a dream lies in its interpretation. A dream left uninterpreted is like a letter never opened. Miketz asks us how we read the dreams in our own lives. Our hopes, our fears, our sense of what might be possible all demand something of us.

Joseph's life reminds us that holiness does not move in a straight line. It grows through failure, humility, and learning when to step back and let God speak through us. Like the Hanukkah lights that increase each night, even after darkness, we are capable of adding more wisdom, more responsibility, and more light to the world.